



Coroner On "Careless Method of using a siding" Swannington rail victims were "trespassing"

A verdict of accidental death was returned at the inquest at Coalville yesterday on the victims of the Swannington railway tragedy - Elsie May Horrobin, aged 36, and Horace, her seven-months-old baby. The Coroner, Mr. H. J. Deane, pointed out that so far as the first section of the siding was concerned the Swannington Pumping Co. only had running powers. Over another section beyond the corner they were the occupiers. There was no right of way and anybody walking along there was trespassing.

There was no doubt that it was a walk which was frequently used.

"When I was there with the constable," said the coroner, "I saw a woman with a perambulator going exactly the same way. The constable did not stop her and the woman evidently did not expect to be stopped."

William Henson Rowse, carter and blacksmith, of Main-street, Swannington, said he was employed by the Swannington Pumping Company to shunt wagons down to the pumping station and was so engaged last Wednesday with the aid of three horses.

RIGHT HAND BEND

After going a few yards, the wagons took a right hand bend and he pulled them the rest of the way with the horses.

That was what they did last Wednesday. A man named Matchett, who was a friend of his, was walking with him.

The Coroner: Didn't it occur to you to send Matchett to see if anyone was about?

Witness said there was no one about, and if anybody was they were trespassing.

Sometimes he had shouted to people to get out of the way.

He had never sent anybody forward to see if the road was clear. He had as one to send and he had his horses to look after.

He did not know what had happened on this occasion until he got round the bend. He sent Matchett for the police and the doctor.

Answering Mr. M. Woodrow, for the Swannington Pumping Co., witness said the wagons usually ran at a sharp walking pace, and as it was an old line, they made a noise.

Herbert Matchett, Miner, of Primrose Cottage, Fone Hill., Swannington, said he was with Rowse when the fatality occurred, and the account given by Rowse was correct.

The coroner said Rowse was a perfectly candid witness, and did not seem to have anticipated the possibility of an accident.

CORONER'S COMMENT

"I cannot conceive that he did not know it was a way frequently used by the public as a walk, and I can't help thinking that it was a careless method of using the siding to let two wagons run by their own momentum round a corner where it was impossible to see what might be in front," he said.

Mr. Deane added, however, that he did not think it amounted to criminal carelessness,

As reported in the Leicester Evening Mail last night. Charlotte Kinton, mother of Mrs. Horrobin and wife of John William Kinton, who was also injured, said she went for a walk with her daughter and the baby in a perambulator.

When they were returning from the direction of the pumping station towards Swannington village, Mrs. Horrobin was walking with the perambulator between the metals.

They managed to push out of the way the three children who were walking, but witness was caught and also her daughter and the baby.