

An Inquisition taken this 26th day of February 1897 at The Yew Tree Inn, Upper Lydbrook in the township of West Dean on view of the body of Hubert John George aged 29 years:
Collier:

The following Jury were Sworn:

- A W Latham
- G S Damsell
- Thomas Newcomen
- Alfred Roberts
- John Lewis
- John Little
- Thomas Bevan
- John Howells
- W J Creed
- P Grimshaw
- Henry Lewis
- John Burgum

Witnesses:

- Emily George:of Lydbrook Widow of deceased
- Thomas Leonard Smart of Lydbrook: Landlord of The Yew Tree
- George Hayward of Lydbrook P[olice] C[onstable]
- William George of Lydbrook: Collier: Brother of deceased

Verdict:

Date of Death: 21st February 1897
Place: Waterloo Mill Dam, Lydbrook, West Dean
Cause: Drowned in the Waterloo Dam at Lydbrook whilst in a fit of temporary insanity which was produced by deceased drinking habits

Payments:

Jurors	12
Use of Room	2.6 T L Smart

Total	14.6

Addendum to Inquest No D480 Hubert John George aged 29 years:

PROPERTY A CURSE: A DISTRESSING CASE AT LYDBROOK:

Mr M F Carter, Coroner and a Jury of whom Rev A W Latham was the foreman enquired into the circumstances of the death of Hubert John George on Thursday afternoon at inquest held at The Yew Tree Inn Upper Lydbrook.

Emily George, deceased’s widow deposed that they had been married 4 and a half years and they had three children. Deceased was a collier about five weeks ago. On the death of witness’s stepmother she became the life owner of The Crown & Sceptre and some cottages, the total rent of which was £54 a year. Witness said her husband had led her a rough life, and she had on many occasions complained to the police about him. He had always been a heavy drinker. During the past month deceased had done six times of work, the rest of the time being spent drinking. He had not been sober a single day since. Deceased never came to bed, but lay in the kitchen. Deceased had frequently threatened her life, but never his own. Deceased insisted on witness giving him money, and in the four weeks she had given him £4 and he had 27/- in wages which he spent. Lately deceased’s eyes had become very wild looking and he seemed very changed. Witness had been in bed all day Sunday, the 21st and was still in bed when her husband came home about 10 o’clock. He appeared to be sober. Deceased first lighted five candles which he placed about the room and then asked witness where his old clothes were. He said he was going to drown himself but didn’t want to spoil what he had on. Witness followed him to the gate and then she asked her neighbours to follow him. Deceased told her to look in the mill pond next morning for him. Mr Thos Leonard Smart, Landlord of The Yew Tree Inn deposed he saw deceased making his way at 10.30 pm toward the Waterloo Mill Pond. He had no hat on. Witness had seen deceased earlier that day. In witness opinion he only had what drink did him good, and he seemed more jolly than usual. Deceased was usually a very quiet man. P. C. Hayward deposed having recovered the body from the pond from out of 15 ft of water. Deceased appeared to have walked deliberately into the water from the bank.

In consequence of the statement which Wm George a brother of deceased made to the Coroner, he was forthwith examined. The witness’s evidence was to the effect that deceased knew that there was a lot of talk in Lydbrook about his wife’s conduct with other men. Pressed by the Coroner the witness said he could not speak to any impropriety himself. The Coroner remarked that if that was all the witness could say, the little he had said would have better been unsaid. Mrs George, the widow on being re-called very indignantly repudiated the witness’s suggestion.

The Coroner in summing up said that the fact of a man being in drink did not exculpate him for his own acts.

The Jury after some consideration found that the deceased drowned himself whilst suffering from temporary insanity which was the result of deceased’s drinking habits.