

Copy Depositions

- 11 -

John Henry Caldwell dec'd

Cecil Holden

Cover

Rickenhead

CORONER'S DEPOSITIONS

BOROUGH OF BIRKENHEAD,

in the County of Chester.

To Wit.

DEPOSITIONS of Witnesses produced, sworn,

and examined, this

31st

day of

October.

one thousand, nine hundred and

eighteen

before

CECIL HOLDEN, Esquire, Coroner of our Lord the King, for the said Borough,

touching the death of

John Henry Caldwell

now lying dead at Birkenhead aforesaid.

*William Caldwell on oath states - I live at 16 Prinsep's
Road, Ellerslie Port and am a Corrugated Sheet Iron Worker.*

*The body today viewed by the Coroner and Inquest Jury
at the Mortuary attached to the Borough Hospital is that of
my Son, John Henry Caldwell age 25 years 9^o 15963
Lance Corporal in the 17th King's Liverpool Regiment in
private life was an Iron Sheet Worker.*

*I saw deceased on Tuesday 27th inst at my house,
Ellerslie Port, when he appeared to be quite normal
but had been previously depressed.*

*Given before me
Cecil Holden
Coroner*

William Caldwell.

William Thomas Wilson on oath states +
I am an Engine Driver in the employ of the Great
Western Railway.

✓ On Wednesday the 30th October 1918 I was in charge
of a Goods train which left Stokenbridge at 12/10 am.
About 10/38 am I passed through Spital Station on
the down fast line.

On approaching I sounded the whistle before reaching
the overbridge which is my usual custom on account
of the platform commencing immediately at the other
side of the bridge.

✓ I was keeping a good lookout and did not see anyone
on the platform or the line.

The line and bridge wall are slightly on the curve
and this tends to obscure one's direct view.

On arrival at Blackpost Sheet (Down) Signal Box at
11.5 am I received information from the signal man
through my fireman that my train had run over
the deceased. I had no previous knowledge of the happening
I neither saw nor felt anything unusual when
✓ passing the place in question that an accident

had occurred.

There were no marks or signs on our engine of having
struck anything

William Thomas Wilson

Sworn before me.

David H. Hill

Comer.

Adopted Request.

5th November.

W. Kenneth
and
W. E. Griffiths
for the
Company.

Francis Bowles on oath states:- I am
Station master at Spital Station.

On Wednesday the 30th October 1918 the deceased
alighted on No 4 Platform from the 10-10 am train
from Chester at 10.43 am from the front part of
the train, and walked in the direction of the
steps close to the Bridge.

I produce a photo of Ledsham Station which is
exactly similar to Spital station.

After the departure of the train I also went towards
the steps and met the deceased coming towards me.

I questioned him as to where he was going and he
stated that he had lost his cap.

I enquired where and when and he replied that he
had travelled with the last train which went
through to Hooton from Birkenhead (no doubt the
9.55 am) and his cap had fallen on to the line.

owing to his having only one leg and having to use
crutches I requested him to wait and I would ring
a porter to search for the cap. I called Porter Jones
at the same time asking the deceased where the

cap had fallen. He replied "Near the Box".
Porter Jones then went along the line and I
requested the deceased to step on the platform and
we would find his cap.

I then left him near the steps and went to the goods
yard. Immediately afterwards a fast goods train
went through to Budestichad on No 2 line. Shortly after
it had passed my attention was called by the gas man
Jones to the deceased lying in the four feet of the down
fast line 27 yards from the crossing. I went to
him at once. He appeared to be badly injured
his left leg being nearly severed, also injured to the
head. A tourniquet was applied ~~to~~ and I obtained
the services of "first-aid man" also a doctor and
the deceased was afterwards removed by a
Bromborough Motor Ambulance to the Borough Hospital.
The deceased after my leaving him would appear
to have gone over the crossing and got as far as
No 2. platform.
No one would appear to have ~~gone~~ seen the deceased
actually run over.

8

The letter produced signed "Foster" was found
on the line close to where the deceased was found

Francis Bowler.

Shown before me

Coat Alden

Carman.

Charles Ernest Jones on oath states: I am posted
at Spital Station. I was on 7^o 4 platform when
the deceased alighted there on the 3^o 11^o 11^o.

The Station Master called me and explained that
the deceased had lost a cap on the up foot line and
instructed me to go and find it. The witness Fowler

✓ Told the deceased to ~~stop~~ stop on the platform and
the cap would be found for him. The Stowbridge
goods train passed him on the way to Birkenhead
and I walked in the direction of the box.

A moment or so afterwards I looked back as the
signalman beckoned to me.

At that time I saw the deceased lying in the four foot
with others in attendance.

I did not see the deceased leave the platform.

✓ Subsequently I found the cap about 250 yards away
further past the signal box.

Sworn before me
Cecil Holden

Carones

Charles Ernest Jones.

About Hearing on talk states - I am for many
years an apprentice on ^{the} London North Western Railway employ
and on the 30th ulto was engaged working at Spital
Station on the platform. I saw the porter go up the
line to look for the case and then I saw the deceased
✓ walk down the slope on No 4 Platform, cross the
rails on the crossing and scappa at the foot of
No 2 slope. I saw him put one crotch on a corner of
the Bridge. After he had done this he stood and
looked across towards the Portico Green. That was
the last I saw of him before the train passed.

My attention was distracted for a moment and the
goods train came along (~~from Spital~~) and went
✓ through on No 2 line. I was standing on No 1
Platform. I then saw the deceased's body rolling under
the waggons and the trucks passed right over him.
The body was dragged along and was left behind
the train in the four foot about 27 yards from
the slope. I raised an alarm and assistance came.
✓ I subsequently noticed that both the deceased's crotches
were standing where I had seen him place the one

I have spoken of.

They were propped up against the Bridge at the foot of
No. 2.

Sworn before me.

Edw. Holden.

Comman

A. Herring.

John News on oath states - I am the fireman of
the goods engine (880) in question.

I corroborate my Davis statement.

On arrival at Blackrook Street we were informed that
the deceased had been knocked down at Spital, but

✓ I was not aware that anything of the kind had
happened.

I did not feel anything on the Engine to indicate
that we had passed over anything on the line.

I was looking out on the left side ^{of the} engine going
through Spital Station and on the approach
thereto I saw nothing unusual.

Sworn before me.
Cecie Holden
Coroner

John Owens.

William John Moore on oath further states +

✓ The following is a copy of a statement which I believe
intended giving at this Inquest. Dr Wadlin is unable
to attend the Inquest owing to an attack of Pleurisy
and pneumonia. +

I am House Surgeon at the Borough Hospital, Oldham.
The deceased John Henry Caldwell was admitted to the
Borough Hospital on Wednesday the 20th inst at 12 noon,
with a history of his having been run over by a
Railway Waggon. On admission he was in a
condition of severe shock and collapse. His left thigh
(lower part) knee and leg were crushed attached to
the remaining portion of the thigh only by a piece
of skin and one or two tendons. His right leg was
amputated before the accident and was quite healed.
The lower part of his right thigh, and the remaining
part of the stump were reduced to a pulpy condition
resulting from fracture of the bones.

✓ He had one lacerated wound on the chin, one on left temple,
and two scalp wounds on the back of the head. There were
abrasions all over his face, and bruises over the shoulder and

back and eyelids of the right eye. He died at 12.30 p.m.
the same day.

The cause of death was ÷ Shock and haemorrhage.

Sworn before me
Cecil Holden
Baron.

Frederick George Daniel Phipps on oath states -

✓ I am a patient at Alderley Hospital. I knew the deceased I was speaking to him at the Hospital on the morning the 30th ulto.

He appeared to be quite (good) right and in good spirits.

He was expecting to be fitted with an artificial limb in a day or so and was looking forward to his discharge.

Sworn before me
Cecil Hatten
Coroner

F. G. D. Phipps

William John Moore on oath further states +

The following is a copy of a statement which Dr Wadlin intended giving at this Inquest. Dr Wadlin is unable to attend the Inquest owing to an attack of Pleurisy and pneumonia. +

I am House Surgeon at the Borough Hospital, Bournemouth. The deceased John Henry Caldwell was admitted to the Borough Hospital on Wednesday the 20th inst at Bournemouth, with a history of his having been run over by a Railway Waggon. On admission he was in a condition of severe shock and collapse. His left thigh (lower part) knee and leg were crushed attached to the remaining portion of the thigh only by a piece of skin and one or two tendons. His right leg was amputated before the accident and was quite healed. The lower part of his right thigh, and the remaining part of the stump were reduced to a pulpy condition resulting from fracture of the bones.

He had one lacerated wound on the shin, one on left temple, and two scalp wounds on the back of the head. There were abrasions all over his face, and bruises over the shoulder and

✓ From enquiries made by me I find that the deceased was wounded on the 9th April 1917, he had the right leg amputated. He was operated on last at Fogackuly about the end of last February.

After this he had an attack of Pneumonia while at Fogackuly. He came home from "Wotton Convalescent Home" on the 2nd May last.

On or about the 2nd September he went to Somic Street (Bristol) where he remained for about 16 days returning home (having been felled by the change) where he remained until 2 weeks ago when he went to the Alderney Hospital.

I produce original letter signed "Hobbs" found upon the deceased and letter from the Chief Constable of Chester to the Council relative thereto. The writer of the former is a Mr Robinson a newspaper reporter of Chester and personal friend of the deceased.

Seen before me
Cecil Holden
Coroner

W. J. Moore.

Copy Verdict.

The Cause of his death was :- Shock and lacerations consequent on Compound fracture of the left thigh and other injuries the result of the deceased being accidentally run over by a Great Western Goods Train on the Joint Railway at Spital Station in the County of Chester on the 28th ulto.