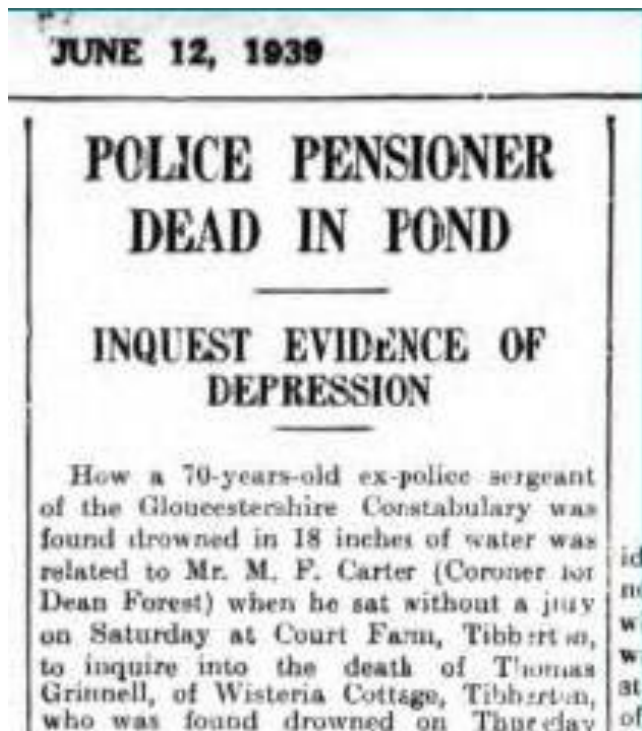


POLICE PENSIONER DEAD IN TIBBERTON POND (1939)



Inquest evidence of depression

How a 70-years-old ex-police sergeant of the Gloucestershire Constabulary was found drowned in 18 inches of water was related to Mr. M. F. Carter (Coroner 101 Dean Forest) when he sat without a jury on Saturday at Court Farm, Tibberton, to

inquire into the death Thomas Grinnell, of Wisteria Cottage, Tibberton, who was found drowned on Thursday last.

A verdict was returned that death was due asphyxia and shock from immersion in water, the deceased at the particular moment not of sound mind.

P.C. Frank Grinnell, of Gloucester, stated that deceased was his father and was seventy years old. He had retired from the Gloucestershire Constabulary 19 years ago after serving for 29½ years. During his long career as a policeman, he had served his communities well and as a Sergeant in Newlands he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Meda in 1917.

The last time he saw his father alive was two years ago last July, when he left the (witness's) house to move to the Tibberton district to reside. During the time his father lived with him he had had periods of depression, for which had been treated by various doctors. He did not know the state of his health during the past six months.

Mrs. Ada Kate Dawe, Wisteria Cottage, Tibberton, said that Mr. Grinnell had resided with her since September 1938, during which time he had suffered from depression, and had been attended to by a doctor. His condition did not get any better, and he had complained to her about not being able to sleep.

Witness then went on relate that about 3.30 p.m. on Thursday, she left Grinnell in the house, and when she returned about 4.30 p.m., he was missing. She looked for him, and as she got near the Fish Pool, she saw his hat. She looked over the rails and saw his body in the water.

Frank Pitman, a farm labourer, of Church Cottage, Tibberton, said he went to the Fish Pool and saw Grinnell in the pool. The water was only 18 inches deep. With assistance, he got the body out. Answering the Coroner, witness said some wooden railings, then a laurel fence, and a wall 3ft. high protected the pool.

P.C. Whitney, Huntley, said he found two superficial cuts on the throat, the upper cut being 2 inches long and the lower one 3 inches. He came the conclusion that some instrument had been used, and later he recovered a razor from the pool near where the body was discovered. Witness said that he had known Grinnell for many years, and he had formed the opinion that he suffered from depression.

Dr. W. M. L. Johnstone, of Newent, stated that he had treated Grinnell for arteriosclerosis, but his condition did not improve, and had developed mental depression. He formed the opinion that the cause of death was from asphyxia and shock due to immersion in the water.

In recording the verdict, the Coroner said that after observation he should like to emphasise how well Grinnell had been looked after by Mrs. Dawe. Sympathy with the family was expressed at the conclusion by P.C. Whitney on behalf of the Gloucestershire Constabulary, the Rev. W. Goyne (Rector of Tibberton), to which the Coroner associated himself, and alluded to the excellent service deceased had done in the Constabulary. P.C. Grinnell acknowledged these expressions on behalf of the family.

Edited extracts from newspaper article, as reported in the Citizen 12th June 1939 and Gloucester Journal 17th June 1939 by D Mills.