

# KNUTSFORD CRITICISM

## SHOULD HAVE OWN AMBULANCE, SAYS CORONER

### N.F.S. CAR IN FATAL CRASH

After hearing of the time elapsing between a man meeting with injuries and his admission to hospital, the Coroner (Mr. R. A. Daniel) asked a police constable at an Altrincham inquest on Tuesday if Knutsford had an ambulance of its own. When he received a reply in the negative, the Coroner remarked: "It is about time they had. I have mentioned this matter before today."

The inquest concerned the death of James Hankey (68), builder's labourer, of Vale Cottage, Tabley Road, Tabley Superior, who received fatal injuries on the Manchester Road at Knutsford on Saturday. The evidence was that the accident happened at 8.40 a.m. and the Altrincham ambulance was summoned. While lying at the roadside, Hankey was attended by Dr. Lovell, and he was admitted to Altrincham General Hospital at 9.45. He died the same afternoon.

#### WITNESS'S DEATH

The Coroner mentioned that one of the witnesses whom he intended to call, a man named Joseph Entwistle, of The Brooklands, Crewe, was electrocuted on Sunday.

The widow, Mrs. Ada Hankey, said her husband was a very active man for his years. He had an unsuccessful operation on his right eye about three years ago, and he could not see with that eye. His left eye was normal for the purpose of working. After the accident, she saw him in hospital, and he told her that he did not see the car approaching.

Dr. B. Dowdell, house surgeon at the hospital, said the cause of death was shock, due to a compound depressed fracture of the skull.

#### CREWE FIREMAN'S EVIDENCE

William Beacall, of 23, Albert Street, Crewe, a leading fireman in the N.F.S., said he was a passenger in an N.F.S. car which was proceeding to Liverpool. Travelling past the Heath at Knutsford, the car was going at about 20 miles per hour. He noticed a man standing on the kerb about 50 yards away.

"We were three or four yards away," Beacall said, "when he suddenly ran into the nearside of the car, colliding with the front nearside wing and the glass side-screen of the front door. The driver applied his brakes and swerved. The man never looked to his right, and witness did not think the driver could have done more than he did to avert the collision."

Constable Stanfield said Hankey was employed in Victoria Street South, Knutsford, about 200 yards from the scene of the accident. He would have to cross the road to reach his place of employment.

## DRIVER'S STATEMENT

Constable Stanfield read a statement made to him by the driver of the car, Frank Ford (30), a fireman in the N.F.S., of 28, Laura Street, Crewe. Ford said Hankey ran into the road without looking towards the car. He had been driving since 1929, and had not had an accident previously.

Recording a verdict of "Misadventure," the Coroner said that, owing to his blind right eye, Hankey would have to turn his head to see the car, and the evidence was that he did not look at all to his right. He (the Coroner) exonerated the driver from blame.

## COMMENTING CORONER CRITICISED

Knutsford's ambulance facilities were mentioned at the monthly meeting of the Urban Council on Tuesday, when Mr. Percy Harwood referred to a comment by Mr. R. A. Daniel (District Coroner) that "it was time Knutsford had an ambulance."

"If," said Mr. Harwood, "Mr. Daniel was fully acquainted with the facts, he would not be so ready in making such remarks."

The Clerk (Mr. J. H. Yates).—The Coroner at least might inquire from the persons most intimately connected with the question of ambulance facilities in Knutsford before making such remarks. He has not done so. I have not had any communication from him on the subject.

The Chairman (Mr. E. Waldron).—We cannot stop men like him making such statements, but it would be far better if Mr. Daniel made inquiries into the matter before saying such things.

Mr. Harwood moved, and Mr. E. S. Thomas seconded, that the Clerk be instructed to write to Mr. Daniel pointing out to him the facilities possessed in Knutsford for ambulance service.

Mr. Thomas commented that the Council and the town were criticised for no reason, and if the Coroner knew all the circumstances there would be less criticism.

Mr. F. Johnson.—Probably he does know all the circumstances.

The Chairman.—He has never made any inquiry from this Council through our Clerk.

The resolution was carried.

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