

Name: Robert Lees
Occupation: (Father of John Lees)
Home: Oldham
Date: 25 September 1819
Source: Lees Inquest 12 – 14
Summary: Close observation of health and demeanor of John Lees before travelling to and after returning from St.Peters-field, then bleeding to death within days.
Done by: CW

ROBERT LEES called in, sworn, and examined, by the CORONER.

Q. Are you the father of the deceased?

A. I am.

Q. Did he live with you on the 16th of August last?

A. Yes, he did.

Q. At what time did he leave your house on the morning of the 16th of August last?

A. He left my house, as I suppose, between eight and nine o'clock on that morning.

Q. Did you know he was going to Manchester?

A. I did not.

Q. What was the state of his health before he went to the meeting?

A. He was as hearty as ever he was since he was born, when he went away.

Q. When did you next see him?

A. I saw him the next morning between eight and nine o'clock.

Q. Where was he then?

A. In the factory.

Q. What was he doing there? Was he at work?

A. No; he was standing at the top of the landing in my factory. I desired him to rove for me.

Q. Did you see that he was hurt?

A. I saw his shirt all over blood.

Q. How did you see that?

A. He had his coat and waistcoat off.

Q. Did he do any work?

A. I judged he was unable to work: and, feeling angry at his having been to the meeting, I told him if he could not work, he must go to the Overseer, for I would not support him.

Q. Well, what did he say to that?

A. He never spoke; and I said no more.

Q. Did he go to his work?

A. He attempted to work that day, but he could not.

Q. Did any body else see him besides you?

A. Yes; one of the men named Yorke saw him too.

Q. Had you any conversation with him after this?

A. Yes; I had on the Sunday but one following. He was then washed and cleaned, and he said he was going to walk out, and he asked me to give him some money, and I gave him two shillings to get some nourishment.

Q. Was he in pretty good health then?

A. No; he had been very ill all the time.

Q. What means did you take to know what was amiss with him?

A. I did not take any particular notice of him, because I thought he would get better; but my mistress can tell you a great deal better than I can about him.

Mr. HARMER—(*To the Coroner*)—You will find, Sir, that the young man had medical assistance; he was attended by Mr. Earnshaw, a surgeon.

Examination of the Witness resumed by the CORONER.

Q. (*To the Witness*)—When did you first see blood on his arm?

A. On the Tuesday morning.

Q. And yet you did not go to any doctor to assist him?

A. No; he went to the doctor of his own accord; not by my direction.

Q. To what doctor did he go?

A. To Mr. Earnshaw.

Q. Did he live with you?

A. Yes; he eat and lodged at my house till his death.

Q. How did he appear? Did he walk about as usual?

A. No: he laid down on the bed frequently; as he said it eased his arm.

Q. How long did he remain in this way?

A. He kept every day growing worse and worse, till the time of his death.

Q. And yet you tell us you took little or no notice of him?

A. I did not interfere any more than I have told you.

Q. Why were you so apparently indifferent to his situation?

A. Because I thought he would get better; and I did not think there was any danger until the day but one before his death.

Q. When did he at last die?

A. He died about half-past one on Tuesday morning.

Q. When did you begin to think he would not get better?

A. It was on the Sunday that I saw the great change in him.

Q. Did you then get any further assistance or help for him?

A. No, I did not.

Q. When did the doctor first begin to attend him at your house?

A. I don't know when he commenced: my mistress can tell you that; but I know he attended him for some time at my house.

Q. When did he first keep his bed?

A. He kept his bed entirely from Saturday night till he died on the following Tuesday morning.

Q. Had you any conversation with him in which he said he was aware of his approaching death?

A. No, I had not.

Q. To what do you attribute his death?

A. I imagine he died of the wounds and crushes he received.

Q. Did you see the injuries he had received?

A. No, I did not; but there are others who did.

Q. What sort of a life did he lead?

A. He led a sober life ever since that time.

Q. Have you not seen him intoxicated since?

A. No, I have not; he has not been intoxicated since.

Q. What were his habits before, as to sobriety?

A. He drank a little, sometimes, on a Saturday night, after work, but he was generally as steady as any body in this town; that I know.

Q. Of how many persons does your family consist?

A. My wife Hannah, a daughter named Sarah, and two sons, named James and Benjamin.

Q. Did they all live with you during your son's illness?

A. Yes, they did.

Q. Well, I have nothing more to ask you. (*To the Jury.*)— Have the Jury any question they wish to put to this witness?

A JUROR—(*To the Witness*)—Did your apparent carelessness in not attending more particularly to your son arise from supposing his mother would pay him proper attention?

A. Yes; and she did pay him every attention. I knew he would be as well looked after as if I was present all the time.

The CORONER—(*Addressing himself to Messrs. Harmer and Denison*)—Have you, gentlemen, who are attending here for some purpose or other, any question to ask this witness?

Mr. HARMER—(*To the Coroner*)—I thank you, Sir, we have none to put.