

# Little Doris Hanley



**Bacup Times April 1905**  
**STACKSTEADS CHILDS DEATH**  
**STRANGLER BY THE RAILS OF THE BED**

The sad death of Doris Hanley the 14 month old child of Sarah Ellen Hanley 35 Acre Mill Road was the subject of a inquest held at St Lukes Mission Room Stacksteads yesterday afternoon. On Wednesday the mother left the child in bed while she went to work in the mill, asking a neighbour to look in occasionally to see that it was alright. The neighbour visited the house three times during the afternoon, but on the mother returning home at half-past five she found the child with its head between the rails of the bed and its body hanging over the side. It was then unconscious and died before the arrival of a Doctor.

Mr F.N.Molesworth was the coroner, and Mr Ormerod Lord the foreman of the jury. Sarah Ellen Hanley widow of Thomas Hanley, said she was the mother of the child witness had four other children. She last saw the child alive at about quarter-past one Wednesday afternoon. It was then asleep in bed. Witness went to work Wednesday afternoon and asked a neighbour named Mrs Greenhalgh to go in occasionally to look at the child and see that it was alright. Witness returned home at half-past five and sent the little boy, who had been in the house since half-past four upstairs to see if the child was alright. He called Witness upstairs and she went and found the child with its head through the rails of the bed, and its body hanging of the side of the bed. The body was quite warm but the child was unconscious. Witness took the child downstairs at once but it lived only a few minutes. There was a red mark at the side of the neck, and the Doctor who arrived just after the child had died, said he thought it had dislocated its neck. The child had been a good sleeper and witness thought it would be safe to leave it in charge of the neighbour. The neighbor went in at half-past three and half-past four and the child was then alright.

Rose Greenhalgh, wife of Thomas Nuttall Greenhalgh, 37 Acre Mill Road said the last Witness asked her on Wednesday afternoon to look in occasionally at the child. Witness went in the first time at half-past three and listened at the bottom of the stairs, but hearing nothing went away again. She went into the house the second time, and again listened but hearing nothing concluded that the child was still asleep. The boy went in for the key at half-past four and Witness asked him to look after Doris, and he said he would. Witness went into Mrs Hanley's house again at twenty-past five and asked the boy, who was twelve years old, if he had got the child up. He said "She is asleep yet " Soon after half-past five, Witness was again called in and found that the mother had got the child in her arms downstairs. It was unconscious, but lived about ten minutes. They sent for the Doctor at once, but the child was dead when he arrived. She saw the body laid away, there was a red mark under its chin. It did not seem to have cried, Mrs Hanley was a woman who looked after her children well. Coroner: Its rather a long time to leave a child isn't it?. Witness: Yes but the child as always been a good sleeper, and if it had made any noise I should have heard it.

Vernon Hanley 11 years of age last birthday said he got back from school about half-past four, and went up to see his little sister about twenty minutes to five. She was then asleep in bed, and alright. He heard nothing of her and did not go upstairs again until his mother came home at half-past five. The child had then her head through the rail. The Coroner said the case was a very sad one. He thought the jury would have no doubt as to what had been the cause of death. The child had evidently been playing about the bed and got its head through the rails. It had then slipped off the bed and received injuries to the neck which caused its death. There was no doubt the injuries were accidental. In a case of that sort every sympathy was felt for the mother, but he could not help thinking that it was a rather long time to leave a child 14 months old alone in the house.

The jury returned a verdict of " Accidental Death ".