

found twenty feet from the body, lying propped up against the railway embankment. The right barrel had been fired. Neither money or revolver were found on the body, though the watch was not missing, and was found to have stopped at six o'clock.

The other circumstances of the case are irrelevant for my present purpose.

A medical man practising in the parish having been called upon to perform an autopsy, deposed to the presence of a gunshot wound of the left orbit, passing in a direction obliquely upwards to the vertex, and an appearance resembling a burn of the left cheek; also a very extensive comminuted depressed fracture of the skull without accompanying hemorrhage. A partial examination only was made, the brain not being removed. About twenty grains of shot were found near the vertex.

The opinion given was to the effect that the gunshot was accidental and had caused death, but that after death the head had been subjected to violence, leading to the fracture of the skull. This finding not being satisfactory to the jury, an examination of the body was ordered, and I happened to be the person selected to perform it.

The only really suspicious element in the case was the distance from the body at which the gun was found, but this was subsequently reconciled with the theory of accidental death by the deposition of a body of Oblat Fathers from a neighbouring monastery, who, while out taking a walk in the afternoon of the day following the tragedy, and twenty-four hours previous to the finding of the body by the deceased's relatives, saw the gun lying on the plank beneath which the body lay. These gentlemen did not feel at liberty to mention the fact of their having seen the body at all until about a week later.

This explanation of the gun being found at a distance from the body was compatible with a theory of accidental death, and the experimental evidence that a gunshot could produce all the injuries found in the deceased of course disposed of the idea of injury to the skull being due in any part to blows on the head inflicted after death, and led subsequently to a verdict of accidental death being rendered.