

SHOCKING CHILD MURDER AT MEASHAM.

Measham, a small and quiet market town, lying between Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Atherstone, has been the scene of a shocking child murder, and an inquest upon the body was opened at the Union Inn, at that place, on Tuesday morning last, before Mr. Joseph Sale, of Derby, the Coroner for the Repton and Gresley division of that county. It appears that the deceased was a girl nearly six years of age, and one of three illegitimate children of Ann Orton, wife of a labouring man employed at one of the breweries at Burton-on-Trent, and now residing at Appleby Magna, Leicestershire. When married, about twelve months ago, her husband was given to understand that she had only one bastard child besides the one of which he was the father, whereas she had two in the keeping of an aunt at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and for the maintenance of one of which she paid 1s. 6d. per week. Matters went on comfortably until a short time ago, when the aunt eloped with a man with whom she had been acquainted for a time, and the home was broken up. Admission was refused the children at the Ashby Union, and Mrs. Orton conveyed them to one of her husband's relations at Measham. This took place on Thursday, the 2nd inst. Having a family of her own, the husband's sister only consented to take one of them, and the deceased, who was supposed by the Measham people to be one of the absconding aunt's children, was taken away. The mother then, it would appear, in her bewilderment and grief, resolved upon taking away the unfortunate child's life; for it is alleged that she straightway took it to the Mease, a small brook adjacent to the town, and there deliberately drowned it. The body was found on Saturday, and recognised as that of the little girl belonging to Ann Orton.—Mrs. Orton was arrested by Sergeant Taylor, taken before the magistrates, and remanded until Thursday. While in the lock-up at Woodville she is reported to have made a confession of her guilt to Superintendent Carline, and even to have repeated what the poor child said at the time she was holding it in the water. The case has caused great excitement in the neighbourhood. The Coroner resumed his enquiry on Wednesday, when two doctors who had examined the body were called as witnesses; and the full magisterial investigation took place, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, on Thursday. Prisoner was arraigned for the wilful murder of her illegitimate child Nelly Armston, aged 6 years. When apprehended and told the charge, the prisoner said "What could I do?" and began to cry. On being left in the charge of Superintendent Ward, prisoner, turning to him, said, "Mr. Ward, what could I do with the child? My aunt has run away, and left it at Ashby. I went over to try and get it in the workhouse, but could not, and I wanted one or two women to take the child, but they could not; they had got enough of their own. I did not know what to do with it. My husband did not know that I had had this before I was married. I dare not tell him. I did not know what to do with it, so I threw it into the water. I have been miserable ever since."—Prisoner, who had nothing to say in reply to the charge, but sat weeping bitterly during the investigation, was committed for trial at the Derbyshire Assizes.

Image © THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Image reproduced with kind permission of [The British Newspaper Archive](#).

<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000484/18731101/034/0004?browse=fallse>