No(r)ster Family History

Place: Drowned Off Portsea, Hampshire

Hannam, Mary Ann (*1816 - †1878) 2

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Mary Ann Hannam

*1816 - †7 Mar 1878

Father:	???
Mother:	???
Husband:	Richard Noster (*1812 - †?)
Child:	Henry John Morrison or Norster (*1836 - †?)
Birth:	1816
Wedding:	26 Jan 1851 St Mary's Church, Portsea, Hampshire (Richard Noster)
Death:	7 Mar 1878 Drowned Off Portsea, Hampshire
Funeral:	11 Mar 1878 Portsea, Hampshire

Note: [a)] 1851-Census: 1 Fretts Court, Portsmouth, Hants. (Born abt 1816)nn1861-Census: 1 Fretts Court, Portsmouth, Hants. (Born abt 1814)nn1871-Census: 1 Fretts Court, Portsmouth, Hants. (Born abt 1816)nnDEATH: Found drowned off Southsea beach March 7 1878, buried unconsecrated - did she take her own life?nnOCCUPATION: 1851 (C) No Occupationn1861 (C) Laundressn1871 (C) Washing WomannnBIOGRAPHY: Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle, Saturday July 7, 1855.n"Maria Norster was charged with behaving in a riotous manner in North-street the previous evening. She expressed her sorrow for the conduct she has been guilty of, and this being the first time the attention of the police had been called to her conduct, she was only sentenced to one days' impt. with hard labour."nHampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle, Saturday, March 9, 1878; Issue 4754. n"BODY FOUND ON SOUTHSEA BEACH.-nAbout half-past ten on Thursday morning the body of a woman apparently about 50 years of age was discovered on Southsea Beach by a person named Sibley, of Cutler's-row, Landport, and afterwards removed to the “Granada Arms”. The deceased was about 5ft. in height, and was dressed in a black crepe bonnet trimmed with black feather, dark grey woollen shawl, black alpaca apron, stuff dress, and brown striped linsey petticoat, one of her under garments bearing the letter “T” worked in red cotton. There is a small hairy mole on the left cheek, and on the fourth finger of her left hand there was a brass ring. An inquest takes place this afternoon, but up to yesterday the body had not been identified."nHampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle, Wednesday March 13, 1878; issue 4755.n"MYSTERIOUS SUICIDE OFF SOUTHSEA BEACHnOn Saturday afternoon an inquest was held at the 'Granada Arms' East Southsea, by the Coroner (W. H. Garrington, Esq), on the body of a woman which was reported in our last issue as having been found on Southsea Beach.nThomas Sibley, a fish hawker, of No. 7, Cutler's-row, Marie-la-bonne, Landport, said he was walking on the promenade at Southsea Beach, opposite South Parade, just before ten o'clock on Thursday morning last, by himself, when he observed a woman lying at the edge of the water, with her head to the westward, towards the Castle. He went towards her, and found the deceased in the water with her face downwards. Her clothes were saturated with water. There was nothing lying near her on the beach, nor was there anyone in the neighbourhood at the time. He gave information to the police, and Constable Sprake came and took charge of the body, and caused it to be removed to the "Granada Arms". In reply to other questions by the Coroner, the witness said he was somewhat alarmed when he found the woman, and in consequence did not turn her over before he went for the police. The Coroner said he hoped if such a circumstance should again occur the witness would promptly see if the person had ceased to live. A few moments sometimes served to make the difference between life and death, although he did not know, of course, that in this instance the woman's life might have been saved.nCharles Barnes, living at 24, Grosvenor-terrace, Fratton-road, a Dockyard pensioner, stated that the body found was that of his late servant, known to him as Mrs Norster. He believed her Christian name was Mary, and that she was about 50 years of age. She had lived with him rather more than a year, and he noticed that she had a propensity for drink. When he took her into his service he did not know anything about her previous life, and had no reference as to her character. She came to him from a register office, and thinking she would suit, he engaged her, and found her an excellent servant with the one exception

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he had mentioned. On Thursday morning, about eight o'clock, he paid her the wages due to her (2s. 6d.), and at the same time cautioned her as to her future conduct with drink. She made no reply to him, and he did not observe that his remarks made any effect upon her. He did not give her notice to quit his service. Witness soon afterwards went out, and returned between twelve and one, when he found that the deceased was not in the house. He found the fire gone out and that no preparation had been made for dinner, nor had his bedroom been put to rights. The deceased had once before left his house without any intimation to him that she was going out. Nothing was taken out of the house, either belonging to witness or to the deceased. He did not know where to inquire about the deceased, but read an account in the Hampshire Telegraph, published that (Saturday) morning, of a body of a woman unknown having been found drowned at Southsea Beach, and he immediately went and saw the body, which he recognised as that of his late domestic servant. The deceased was not communicative, but of a reserved disposition. He never observed anything peculiar in her appearance, manner, or conversation.nMr. Henry Rundle, surgeon, of Clarence-parade, Southsea, deposed that on Thursday afternoon, by request of the Coroner, he examined the body of the deceased, but there were no wounds or abrasions of any kind upon it, every indication showing that the death had arisen from immersion in the water. From what he saw death had in all probability taken place only within the previous few hours.nMary Elizabeth Evans, a nurse in the service of Mrs. Chamberlain, of 5, South Parade, had stated that she had noticed the body floating in the water on Thursday morning.nGeorge Tucker, living at No. 1, Somerset-cottages, Somerset-road, stated that he was walking on Southsea Common towards Portsmouth about a quarter to ten on Thursday morning, when he was accosted by a female, who asked him if she could get on the beach at the left had side of the Castle, to which he replied that she could, and could walk a mile or two if she chose. She appeared to be very warm and red in the face, but there was nothing strange about her. She was walking quickly. He afterwards noticed that she went in the "Castle" Tavern, but she exhibited no symptoms of having been drinking. He subsequently saw the body at the "Granada Arms", and it was that of the woman he had previously seen on the Common.nCharlotte Butterley, the wife of a seaman living in Smith's-lane, Portsea, said that she had known the deceased for some years, and knew that she had a great deal of trouble. The deceased, who was then a widow, had been the wife of Richard Norster, a naval seaman, who died about seven years since, and prior to that she was the wife of a Mr. Morrison. Her age was 53 or 54 years, and witness knew that she had two children somewhere and also a married sister living at Southsea.nMr. Hugh Robson Evans, of Southsea, said a rumour had been current that neglect was attributable to the police for not having obtained medical aid, but having been present shortly after the body was found he was satisfied that death had taken place and that such blame was undeserved.nThe Coroner said that he was glad to have heard the statement of Mr. Evans, and hoped it would be made public, because he was satisfied that the police invariably did their utmost when such cases arose. He then summed up the evidence, and said that the deceased might have spent the whole of her wages which she had received on the morning of her death in satisfying the cravings of her drinking appetite, and that she might have spent her last penny at the "Castle" Tavern in fortifying her determination to destroy herself, no money whatever having been found upon her.nThe Jury returned a verdict that the deceased had committed suicide, but that there was not sufficient evidence to show the state of her mind at the time.

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