

[Daly, John Thomas]

JOHN T. DALY'S SUICIDE.

HIS BODY FOUND AT WOODSIDE, L.I.

THE STORY OF HIS DISAPPEARANCE, AIMLESS WANDERINGS, AND TRAGIC DEATH—
HE SHOOTS AND HANGS HIMSELF IN A DESERTED HOUSE—
HIS BODY IDENTIFIED AND BROUGHT TO THIS CITY.

The body of Mr. John T. Daly, proprietor of the Windsor Hotel, was found yesterday morning in a deserted house, near the Village of Woodside, Long Island. Mr. Daly disappeared from his residence, No. 4 East Forty-seventh-street, on Tuesday morning last. He visited the Windsor Hotel, where he was tendered a check for \$10,000, the amount of the rent for April, but saying that he would return in a few moments he left the check with the cashier and went out. He next visited the Croton Market in Forty-second-street, where he ordered some provisions for his family and settled his account for the previous month. This was the last time Mr. Daly was seen alive by any one who knew him intimately. Various theories were advanced to account for his disappearance, but none of them furnished a satisfactory clue to his whereabouts. It was said that financial embarrassments were undoubtedly the immediate cause of his mysterious departure, but gentlemen intimately acquainted with Mr. Daly's business affairs discredited this report, saying that his income from the Windsor Hotel and a rock drilling machine in which he was interested was large enough to pay the interest on his indebtedness and leave a goodly sum toward canceling the principal. Indeed, it was asserted that Mr. Daly's financial troubles arising from the great cost of the Windsor Hotel were practically over, and that he had abundant resources with which to meet all demands upon him. The Police said Mr. Daly's friends search with unremitting energy to ascertain his whereabouts from Tuesday afternoon until yesterday, when the news of the finding of his body reached his relatives. The report that he had on his person a large sum of money lent color to the theory of murder, but from the position in which the body was found and its immediate surroundings, there can be no doubt that Mr. Daly committed suicide during temporary aberration of the mind. Appended are the full details of the finding of the body:

MR. DALY'S WANDERINGS AND DEATH.

The apparently impenetrable mystery surrounding the disappearance, on Tuesday morning last, of Mr. John T. Daly, and the suspicious circumstances attending his departure, were cleared up yesterday by the reception of information to the effect that the body of a man corresponding in every way with the description of Mr. Daly had been found hanging from a door in a deserted farm-house on the outskirts of the little village of Woodside, about three miles from Hunter's Point, Long Island. This sad but not altogether

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unlooked for intelligence was imparted to the members of Mr. Daly's family by Mr. Walter Bower, the proprietor of a hotel in the above-named village, at which the gentleman in question stopped. Mr. Thomas M. Daly, the son of Mr. John T. Daly, at once determined to visit Woodside, and on arriving there immediately identified the body as that of his father who had disappeared in such an unaccountable manner, without leaving the slightest possible clue to the whereabouts or the direction in which he had gone. Ever since the date of his departure the members of his family had persistently clung to the belief that after leaving the Croton Market in Forty-second street he had gone to the Grand Central Depot, and taken a train for no very distant place, with the intention of being absent only a short time, and possibly to escape the cares of business. This belief, however, was not based on any evidence, even of a circumstantial nature, and was held in the face of the fact that almost all of Mr. Daly's actions for the few days prior to and on the morning of his disappearance pointed unmistakably either to insanity or suicide, or both. These facts need no rehearsal, and it is now generally conceded that for several days before his departure Mr. Daly wandered about the neighborhood of the Windsor Hotel in an apparently aimless fashion, and in a very unsettled state of mind.

After leaving the Croton Market, on Tuesday morning, Mr. Daly, who was doubtless suffering from temporary aberration of the mind, continued his aimless wandering about the neighborhood, and went to the Central Park, where he was seen as late as 3 o'clock in the afternoon of that day by a lady residing close by the Windsor who knew him perfectly well by sight. She was accompanied by her children, and sat down on the same bench with Mr. Daly, who acted strangely and did not appear to be aware of her presence. He had his head bowed down, and was sitting in a half-stooping posture. Soon after sitting down, the lady, whose name is withheld, noticed that he was counting upon his fingers, and heard him pronounce, in a scarcely audible tone, the names of several of the banks of this city, as if he were counting their number. He remained seated on the bench until after she took her departure. This circumstance is looked upon as another link in the chain of evidence going to show that he was insane.

After leaving the Park, it is supposed that he went northward, and finding himself in the neighborhood of the Astoria ferry, took the boat at the foot of East Ninety-second street for that place, and continued on, down the Astoria road, until he reached the deserted farm-house, where he subsequently committed suicide. The place apparently interested him, for during his wanderings about the village he made many inquiries concerning it. During the early part of Tuesday evening he was noticed walking up and down the verandah of the village hotel in a very excited way. He suddenly disappeared and was not again seen until about 10 o'clock on Wednesday

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morning, when he suddenly appeared at the hotel, and going up to the bar called for a glass of lemonade which was furnished him by Mrs. Bower, the wife of the proprietor, who took particular notice of his strange behavior. He was not seen by anyone during the night, and there is little doubt that he slept in the deserted house above mentioned. This theory receives some confirmation in the fact that during his stay at the hotel he asked for some matches. As he never smoked, it is believed that he wanted them to furnish him with sufficient light in the building to enable him to reach the upper story. Going to the door of the hotel, he stopped, and then paced up and down restlessly for a short time, then, pointing in the direction of the house before referred to, asked Mrs. Bower if it was occupied. She replied that it was not, and he asked the reason. To this question she replied that she did not know, telling him at the same time that it was frequented at night by tramps. He made some casual remark about the changed appearance of this village since his last visit to it, and then went away, continuing during the day the same purposeless wandering about the place, none of the villagers, however, taking particular notice of him or his actions, except Mrs. Bower, who, in the evening, called the attention of her husband to the second visit of the strange man and his remarkable conduct.

By this time he had again disappeared, and as suddenly appeared again on the following morning. He still acted strangely, and immediately upon his entry again called for a glass of lemonade, which was given him without question. Since his arrival in Woodside he had eaten nothing, and must necessarily have been physically as well as mentally in an almost completely exhausted condition. As soon as Thursday morning's papers were received, Mrs. Bowen, noticing the story of Mr. Daly's disappearance and the accompanying description of the missing man, called the attention of her husband to the matter, and said she believed the mysterious stranger was that gentleman. Mr. Bower at once became impressed with the same belief, and made a thorough, but unavailing, search for him, neglecting, however, to go to the deserted dwelling, not thinking it possible that he would stop there.

THE FINDING OF THE BODY.

Here the matter was dropped, and as Mr. Daly did not again make his appearance his strange conduct was soon forgotten, and no more attention was paid to it. Yesterday morning George Bagwell, a resident of Woodside, was walking through the village, and passing near the dilapidated house, noticed that the doors and windows were all open. Going in, out of curiosity, he went through each of the rooms on the lower floor. In one of these he was surprised to find a silk hat and a paper collar on the mantle. Inasmuch as the house was totally unfit for a human habitation, he thought his rather mysterious, and searched all the rooms on the ground floor for some

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elucidation of the matter. He then went up stairs, but failed for a time to discover anything unusual. He was just about to enter the last room, one in the north-west corner of the building, when he saw, to his horror, the body of a man hanging by the neck from the top of the half-opened door. A glance was sufficient to show that the man had been dead for some time, and without waiting to make any examination, Mr. Bagwell hurried away to inform Constable Hart, who, with a number of the villagers, repaired to the scene of the tragedy. Entering the room they were horror stricken at the sight. About the neck of the dead man was tied a white pocket handkerchief, into which was looped his suspenders. These were thrown over the top of the door, and supported the body, the limbs of which had been drawn up in the agony preceding death. Two pools of almost black, clotted blood, were upon the floor, and midway between them lay a six-chambered revolver, with one of the chambers empty. The mark of the bullet was found upon the temple of the unfortunate suicide, and goes to prove that he attempted to shoot himself after making every preparation for hanging. Coroner Carroll, of Newtown, was sent for, and immediately empaneled a jury consisting of the following named villagers: John C. Kennedy, foreman; Denis Cowney, Michael Kenna, Patrick Clohesy, William O’Gorman, Maurice O’Connor, Austin McNamara, Francis Burke, Wess Allen, William Dix, and James Duffy, Jr.

From an examination made by the Coroner it seems apparent that after tying the handkerchief about his neck, and fastening the suspenders to it, Mr. Daly partly closed the door and then threw the suspenders over the top. These were too long to permit of his being suspended clear of the ground, and he therefore discharged the revolver and threw it from him. He then, apparently, drew up his lower limbs, and his head drooping over, the blood flowed from the wound in the temple, forming the clot upon the floor. Recovering partial consciousness, and while yet in the throes of death, he kicked the door still further open and threw his body to the other side, thus making the other and larger clot of blood. In this position he must necessarily have died, as there were no marks of blood in any other place in the room. In the pockets of Mr. Daly’s clothing were found several valuable papers, a gold watch and chain, a pocket-book and about \$12 in money. The diamond studs which he always wore were still in his shirt-front, and the presence of these articles leaves no room for the theory of murder, which some persons are endeavoring to advance. The Coroner’s jury, after viewing the body of the deceased gentleman and examining the scene of the tragedy, adjourned until this evening, when the inquest will be resumed at Flaherty’s Hotel, Laurel Hill. The body was then conveyed to Bower’s Hotel, in Woodside, where it was properly cared for by the proprietor, who is also the village undertaker.

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The deserted dwelling in which Mr. Daly committed suicide is a two-story frame building, situated on what is known as the old Astoria road, about midway between the Long Island City penny bridge and Newtown. It is owned by Mr. Debevoise, and having been tenantless for several years has consequently become a complete ruin, and is visited only by tramps, who make it a resting place. A physician who had examined the body soon after it was cut down gave it as his opinion that the deceased committed suicide on Thursday night. The body was brought to this City last evening and was taken to Mr. Daly's late residence at No. 4 East Forty-seventh-street.

A reporter of THE TIMES last evening saw Mr. Thomas M. Daly, who furnished substantially the same facts as those given above, so far as regards the finding of the body and its identification. No date has yet been fixed for the funeral.

New York Times, New York NY, Mon. 7 May 1877

Transcribed on 11 Sep 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

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JOHN T. DALY'S FUNERAL
SERVICES OVER THE REMAINS OF THE UNFORTUNATE
MAN AT HIS LATE RESIDENCE TO-DAY.

The funeral services of John T. Daly were conducted by Dr. [Edwin Hubbell] Chapin, of the Church of the Divine Paternity [Universalist], at his late residence, No.4 Forty-seventh street, at ten o'clock today. At precisely eleven o'clock the long cortege took up its line of march for Greenwood Cemetery, where the remains were interred in the family lot. At the residence there were present more of the friends of the family and former business acquaintances of Mr. Daly than the spacious mansion could well accommodate. The arrangements for the ceremonies were under the charge of Undertaker Bound, of Long Island City. The remains lay in the south parlor of the residence, in a rosewood coffin, heavily ornamented with silver and enclosed in black cloth, the plate bearing the inscription: John T. Daly, died May 4, 1877, aged fifty-four years." The body was dressed in black broadcloth, and there was a profusion of beautiful floral designs befitting the occasion surrounding the casket, these being gifts from numerous friends. The pall-bearers, eight in number, were not furnished with badges, but were selected at the residence from among the many friends of the family. The occasion was made the more solemn and impressive by the fact that the condition of Mrs. Daly's health would not permit her to be present. The report, however, that she was still unaware of the sad fate of her husband was corrected by an acquaintance of the family who said that Dr. Chapin broke the news to her on Sunday evening.

Among the people who attended the funeral to-day, and who were subsequently seen in considerable numbers at the Windsor Hotel, there was much discussion as to the immediate cause of Mr. Daly's decrepitude of mind. One of these gentlemen remarked that on the Tuesday before Mr. Daly's disappearance he had had a very disagreeable meeting with the lawyer who was pressing him for extra counsel fees, and that he had no doubt it was the straw that broke the camel's back. All agreed that the income from the Windsor was such that a few years would give him the property free from incumbrance, and that his financial condition, aside from extraneous worry, had but little to do with his temporary insanity.

The Daily Graphic, New York NY, Tue. 8 May 1877

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