

Cross-referencing these burials with local newspapers for reports of Coroners Inquests we found articles relating to three of the four deaths.

John Johnson

Another Inquisition was taken at Leir on the 30th inst. on the body of John Johnson, who was unfortunately killed by tripping against a hard piece of clay and falling across the iron rails on the Midland Counties Line when a wagon, loaded with earth, ran over his body. He was employed as driver upon the line. Verdict 'Accidental Death'.

Henry Palmer (alias Green)

Another inquest was held on Thursday last, before the same coroner, on the body of Henry Green, a railway labourer, who met with his death while at work on the Midland Counties line, near Leir, by one of the gang waggons accidentally passing over his body. The unfortunate man was about 21 years of age and came from the neighbourhood of Coventry. Verdict 'Accidental Death'.

Joseph Riley

Another Railway Accident - Another Inquest was held before Mr. Gregory, on Monday last, on the body of Joseph Riley, about 19 years of age, who was accidentally killed by one of the gang wagons running over him on the Midland Counties Railway, near to Broughton Astley, on Saturday last. Soon after the unfortunate circumstance the deceased was conveyed to the Leicester Infirmary in a cart, where in about half an hour after his arrival he expired. Verdict 'Accidental Death'.

No death is ever cheerful but these are particularly sad, especially as they were so young. It is also worth a moment of thought in that if the 4 deaths recorded in the parish for the 1 mile, 2 furlongs and 8 chains of railway is a representative sample then for the whole development of the line around 200 deaths would have occurred. A

high price and an appalling health and safety record compared with today's standard.

The Marriage Records for the parish show occupations relating to the railway around the time of construction. However, it is not clear whether both parties were long-term residents of Leire or whether there was a change in occupations but romance may well have blossomed by virtue of an increase in navvies in the parish!

When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at time of Marriage	Fathers Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
2 nd Oct 1839	Jeremiah Potton	26	Bachelor	Plate Layer (Rail Road)	Leire	William Potton	Brick-maker
	Harriet Hodges	22	Spinster	Framework Knitter	Leire	Charles Hodgen	Brick-maker
13 th Oct 1839	Joseph Perkins	25	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	Richard Perkins	Farmer
	Mary Smith	-	Spinster	Framework Knitter	Leire	Thomas Smith	Labourer
9 th Feb 1840	William Preston	21	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	John Preston	Labourer
	Mary Elizabeth Hill	19	Spinster	Framework Knitter	Leire	Samuel Hill	Labourer
15 th Mar 1840	George Watta	25	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	James Watt	Labourer
	Sally Cripp	24	Spinster	Framework Knitter	Leire	George Cripp	-
* 17 May 1840	Henry Brewer	21	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	James Brewer	Labourer
	Lydia Tew	Full Age	Spinster	Lately in Service	Leire	Joseph Tew	Wool Comber
5 July 1840	William Smith	22	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	William Smith	Labourer
	Sarah Tew	Full Age	Spinster	Framework Knitter	Leire	Joseph Tew	Wool Comber
* 6 th Aug 1840	Richard Brewer	21	Bachelor	Labourer (Rail Road)	Leire	James Brewer	Labourer
	Lydia Tew	Full Age	Spinster	Lately in Service	Leire	Joseph Tew	Wool Comber
* Note: An error was made on the wedding of 17 May, unable to read comment							
13 th Oct 1840	William Goodman	21	Bachelor	Labourer	Leire	Robert Goodman	Thatcher
	Jane Tew	19	Spinster	-	Leire	Joseph Tew	Wool Comber