

"UNCLE BEN" HUMMER DEAD.

His Decomposed Body Found in Field After Two Days Absence from Home.

Last Sunday morning while Wilbur Neighbour and Frank Mitchell were out walking, accompanied with their dogs, they found the lifeless body of Benjamin Hummer, of Madison street. They sat down to rest on the fence under a large maple tree on the farm of Elias R. Bell, near Reese's limestone quarry. After sitting there perhaps a half-hour their dogs attracted their attention and looking behind them saw the body only a few feet away. They immediately notified Coroner Fox, who viewed the same and ordered it removed to C. M. Cochran & Co.'s undertaking rooms. The body was badly decomposed, the features being hardly recognizable. He was identified by his clothing and cane.

Mr. Hummer, who was eighty-four years old, has been making his home with his son, J. Drake Hummer, for several years past. Last Friday morning he informed the family that if he got a chance to ride up to Isaiah Searles's, at Flocktown, he would go there, which he was accustomed to do, and make them a visit. Circumstances point to the probability that poor old "Uncle Ben," as he was familiarly called, committed suicide by taking strychnine. Mental weakness and advanced years are supposed to have prompted the act. On Thursday, the day

previous to his going away, he purchased ten cents worth of that drug at one of the local drugstores, which he said he wanted to kill rats and mice. It is this drug with which it is thought he ended his life. By the side of his body were found apple peelings and it is supposed that he ate an apple and poison together. That he had suicidal intentions was further verified by finding in one of his pockets a double slip noose made from heavy twine, which it is supposed he would have used had the drug failed in its mission.

Besides his son with whom he resided he leaves one other, Albert Hummer, of East Orange. The deceased has been a life-long resident of Hackettstown. In his younger days, before the railroad came here, he drove the stage between here and Dover, at that time the terminus of the Morris and Essex railroad. For about fifteen years he was superintendent of Union cemetery, where he is now buried. For several years he was sexton of the Presbyterian church. He was a member of Musconetcong Lodge, I. O. O. F., and was its oldest member, having been connected with it for over half a century.

The body was in such a condition when found that immediate interment was necessary. Twilight services were held at the grave Sunday evening in the presence of the members of the immediate family, Rev. J. C. Chapman officiating.

The Warren Republican: August 12, 1904

NAME: Benjamin "Uncle Ben" Hummer

DATE OF DEATH: August 7, 1904