

Willie Alfred Walter Ashwin

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NEWPORT

Painter's Tragic Death.---Mr. Willie Alfred Walter Ashwin, 57, a well known painter and house decorator, of 19 Caesar's-road, was found dead in the scullery of his home early on Thursday morning. The taps of the gas copper were turned full on and the room was full of gas. Mr. Ashwin had suffered recently from insomnia and had been in bed with lumbago since the previous Sunday. He was sleeping alone and was last seen alive in his bedroom by his daughter-in-law at about 11 on the previous night. Mr. Ashwin was for many years a member of the Borough Fire Brigade. The inquest was conducted by the Deputy Coroner (R. E. A. Webster, Esq.) at the Guildhall, yesterday (Friday). The widow, Mrs. Lucy Ashwin, said that the deceased was a very excitable man. He had suffered from high blood pressure, and was in the habit of taking aspirins, and latterly, as he had been unable to sleep, he had taken sleeping tablets as well. He had been under medical attention at intervals for several years. He had been in bed with lumbago since the Sunday before his death. She had never heard him threaten to take his life, and he was not in any financial difficulty, as he had more work than he could do. At about 10.30 p.m. on Wednesday she took him a cup of Bovril and made him comfortable before she retired for the night in another room. When she came downstairs at 6.30 the next morning she smelt gas, and found him lying in the scullery near the gas copper, the tube of which had been taken off the burner. There was a cloth over his head, and the room was full of gas. She had heard nothing during the night. Dr. J. J. Dowdall said he was called to the house at 6.50 a.m., and Ashwin had been dead for five or six hours. He was a highly strung and rather nervous type. He visited witness's surgery in January and complained of sleeplessness, and was given treatment. He did not see him again until the Sunday before his death, when he attended him for lumbago. He had attended him several times since. The lumbago was improving, but he complained of being unable to sleep. His death was due to coal gas poisoning. A verdict of suicide while the balance of his mind was disturbed by lumbago and sleeplessness was returned by the Coroner, who expressed sympathy with the widow and family.

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