

Lionel Frederick Banner

Isle of Wight County Press

4 April 1936

THE NEWPORT STREET FATALITY.

INQUEST ADJOURNED FOR 10 DAYS.

The Deputy Coroner (Dr. H. Y. Mansfield) sat with a jury in the High-street Methodist School, Ryde, on Saturday, to inquire into the circumstances leading to the death of Lionel Frederick Harold Banner, 19, of Drill Hall-road, Newport, who died at the County Hospital on the previous Thursday, following an accident at Newport during the early hours of the morning. Banner was riding pillion on a motor-cycle driven by Robert George Stagg, of Woodbine Cottages, St. John's-road, Newport, when a collision occurred with a Southern Vectis bus returning with a party from a dance at Shanklin, at the junction of Pyle-street and St. James's-square. Stagg was also removed to the County Hospital in an injured condition. Mr. F. C. Watts was elected foreman. Mr. H. E. Stratton represented Stagg's family and Inspector H. Rogers was present on behalf of the Police.

The Coroner said he was afraid they would not be able to complete the inquiry that afternoon. He would take evidence of identification and that of the doctor. The driver of the motor-cycle was not in a condition to give evidence and was still in hospital. He was a material witness and they must wait for him to recover.

Frederick William Banner, labourer, of 5, Prospect-road, Newport, the deceased's father, said he was present at his death at 12.15 p.m. on Thursday. Witness was himself a patient at the hospital when his son was brought in. Deceased was not in the habit of pillion riding; he had not ridden a motor-cycle to his knowledge. Deceased lived with his grandmother and was employed as an assistant at the London Central Meat Company.

Mr. Stratton said he should like to assure Mr. Banner how deeply the relatives of Stagg sympathised him in his loss.

Dr. John McElroy, house surgeon at the hospital, deposed that he saw the deceased at 3.45 a.m. on Thursday. He was unconscious on admission, bleeding from the nose and vomiting. There was a swelling over the left thigh bone, which had been fractured. There were no visible injuries except scratches and the nose bleeding. The latter suggested that he had fractured the base of the skull. His opinion was that that death was due to shock and to a fracture at the base of the skull and laceration of the brain. Deceased did not recover consciousness.

The Coroner adjourned the inquiry until Thursday next.

THE FUNERAL.

The funeral took place at Newport on Tuesday amid many signs of the respect and esteem in which the deceased lad was held. The first part of the service was at St. John's Church and the interment at the Carisbrooke Cemetery, the Rev. W. H. Mackinnon officiating. The

mourners were Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Banner (parents), Mr. J. Banner (brother), Mrs. T. Dyer (aunt), Mrs. A. Dyer, of Cowes (cousin), and Mr. G. Linington. The large number present at the church included Mr. G. Nevison, of Ryde (by whom the deceased was formerly employed), and Messrs. C. F. Stagg, C. Cant (manager of the London Central Meat Co., Newport, deceased's employers), and G. Baker. The following members of the Vectis Roads Cycling Club, of which deceased was a member, acted as bearers. Messrs. L. J. Ranger, R. Clack, R. W. Early, and C. T. Webb. The following members of the club also took part in the procession to the church and cemetery: Messrs. R. E. Hannam (hon. secretary), H. A. Spanner (racing secretary), B. H. Stagg, J. T. Matthews, C. H. Smith, J. V. Garrett, and K. Rowe. The many floral tributes included one from the club and another from Mr. and Mrs. F. Banner, of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, deceased's grandparents, who were unable to be present; Mr. and Mrs. Stagg, of Woodbine Cottages; and the London Central Meat Company.

Isle of Wight County Press 25 April 1936

THE NEWPORT SREET FATALITY.

MOTOR-CYCLIST REMEMBERS NOTHING OF THE ACCIDENT.

Yesterday (Friday) the Assistant Deputy Coroner (Dr. H. Y. Mansfield, J.P.), held the adjourned inquest into the circumstances leading to the death of Lionel Frederick Harold Banner, 19, of Drill Hall-road, Newport, who died at the County Hospital on March 26th following an accident at the junction of Pyle-street and St. James's-square that morning. The Coroner sat with a jury, of whom Mr. F. C. Watts was the foreman. Mr. G. S. Green represented the relatives. Mr. H. R. Palmer the Southern Vectis Bus Company, and Mr. H. E. Stratton Robert George Stagg, the motor-cyclist. Inspector H. Rogers represented the police.

At the previous hearing evidence showed that death was due to shock, fracture of the base of the skull, and laceration of the brain.

Gilbert Charles Antony Harwood, of Northwood, said he was driving a Southern Vectis bus at 3 a.m. on March 26th. On approaching the cross-roads at St. James's -street and Pyle-street his speed was approximately 10 miles an hour. His headlights were full on. It was raining heavily and very dark. When three parts over the crossing there was a sudden blur and a crash on his off side, and he felt something strike the door of his cabin. He stopped immediately. - By Mr. Green: His engine was running quietly, but he heard nothing approaching. - By Mr. Palmer: He had been driving for 12 years without an accident and for three years had been driving for the Southern Vectis Company. He was a member of the Company of Veteran Motorists and of the National Society of Expert Motor Drivers, the qualifications for which were that he must have driven for 10 years without an accident or conviction. He had driven practically every of vehicle. After the accident he examined the motor-cycle and saw that the light was very dim.

Robert George Stagg, aged 23, a joiner, of Woodbine, St. John's-road, Newport, said he left Newport on March 25th to attend a dance at the Shanklin Town-hall, deceased being his pillion passenger. They remained at the dance until 2 o'clock, and then went to the car park

for his machine. He had no idea what time they left Shanklin. He remembered leaving there, although he did not know which road he took, and then remembered nothing more until he woke up in hospital. - By the Coroner: He had one drink at the dance - gin - and bitters - at about 10 o'clock - Q. Are you quite sure you had nothing after 10 o'clock? - Yes. - By a juror: He had been driving for six years and had had his present machine for two years. That was his first accident and he had a good deal of experience of driving with a pillion passenger.

P.C. Whatford said the Vectis bus passed him with its headlights full on going in the direction of St. James's-square at a speed of about 15 miles an hour. He had gone a few yards when he heard a terrific crash, and, on looking round, saw that the bus had come to a standstill. It had collided with a motor-cycle. Stagg was lying immediately in front of the near side wheel of the bus and deceased was underneath the bus just behind the front off side wheel. The motor-cycle was wedged across the front wheels of the bus. The light of the motor-cycle was very dim. A doctor ordered their removal to hospital. The bus was on its correct side. The surface of the road was very wet. - By Mr. Stratton: From the marks of the impact it would appear that the motor-cyclist was on his correct side.- By Mr. Palmer: A reasonable explanation of the accident was that the driver of the motor-cycle suddenly saw the bus, swerved to avoid it, and had to carry on with it.

The Coroner said that it was rather unfortunate that no one was allowed to sound a horn at that time. It was very nice for people who were asleep, but when they had to be a driver at night like himself, they found it very inconvenient.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death" and exonerated the driver of the bus from all blame.

Mr. Palmer, on behalf of the Southern Vectis Company, expressed sincere sympathy with the relatives of the deceased and with Mr. Stagg. They were exceedingly sorry that one of their buses should have been involved, and he was glad they had exonerated the driver, because the Company always had the best men they could get for the responsible job of driving their buses.

The Coroner and Mr. Watts, on behalf of the jury, also associated themselves with the expressions of sympathy, which were acknowledged by Mr. Green.

Transcription by Kate MacDonell for the Friends of Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries,
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