Dottie Elizabeth Cooper

Isle of Wight County Press – 21 March 1959

CARISBROOKE WOMAN'S DEATH HASTENED BY FALL

HOSPITAL EXONERATED AT INQUEST

At an inquest at St. Mary's Hospital, Newport, on Monday, it was stated that the death on Thursday week of Miss Dottie Elizabeth Cooper, aged 60, formerly of Carisbrooke, was accelerated by a fall. Recording a verdict of accidental death, the acting Coroner (Mr. J. G. Fardell) exonerated the hospital staff from blame.

Evelyn Mary Weir, of 65 High Street, Carisbrooke, said that her sister was born in Surrey and came to the Island in 1919, moving to High Street, Carisbrooke, in 1924. Witness came to live with her sister in 1947. Miss Cooper enjoyed good health until about six years ago. At one time she owned a tobacconist's shop in Carisbrooke, and about a month after business started to fall away she began to suffer from Parkinson's disease. She was admitted to St. Mary's Hospital in April, 1956, and had been a patient ever since. Witness was told that her sister had had a fall. She was very ill when she last saw her on March 10th, but witness was absolutely satisfied that she could not have had better treatment.

Nursing Auxiliary Mrs. E. M. Thompson said that on March 4th she was on duty in Rookwood ward, where there were about 30 patients. Miss Cooper was walking about the ward, but witness did not see her go out of the building, nor was her attention drawn to that fact. Shortly afterwards she found Miss Cooper on the ground, having fallen down a concrete ramp leading into the yard. She brought her back and put her to bed. She was bleeding from abrasions of the nose and complained of pain in her left shoulder.

Dr. I. D. Hunter Craig (house physician) said that, in addition to the Parkinsonism, Miss Cooper had a mild degree of congestive heart failure. After the fall she was quite coherent and mentally alert. An X-ray showed a fractured dislocation of the left humerus. He understood she was allowed to walk about the ward; she was tottery on her feet, but in view of her disease the more exercise she took the better. She was not, however, allowed to go outside. Dr. Harland (senior physician) consulted Mr. Smythe (orthopaedic surgeon) on March 6th, and, as it was considered she would not stand the strain of an anaesthetic, the alternative treatment of starting exercises was taken. Witness described further symptoms which developed on March 8th, and the treatment given, and said that after improving to a great extent during the next two or three days, Miss Cooper went downhill. In his opinion, the cause of death was bronchial pneumonia, affected to some extent by the fall.

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