

Edwin Cooper

Hampshire Telegraph – 25 September 1858

ISLE OF WIGHT.

NEWPORT.

A coroner's inquest was held at the Grapes Tavern on Wednesday last for the purpose of inquiring into the cause of the death of an infant child named Edwin Cooper, the offspring of a young married couple residing in Orchard-street: and a report having gained circulation that the mother had smothered her boy whilst in a state of intoxication, some very considerable excitement, existed in the neighbourhood. A strict investigation by the coroner and jury, however, could only elicit the fact that the mother, Jane Cooper, on the day previous, about one o'clock in the afternoon had put the child to bed whilst asleep, covering its face over with a thick shawl, to keep, as she said "the flies off," and then placing over that a sheet and a heavy counterpane. On going up stairs about an hour afterwards the child, as might have been expected, was found suffocated for want of air, and all attempts to revive it proved fruitless. The mother strenuously denied having laid down on the bed at all, but admitted that she had drunk a glass of brandy at eleven o'clock, which was given her by a friend, and which made her feel giddy and weak on her legs, and that she previously had half-a-pint of fourpenny, but that she perfectly knew what she was about. Dr. Tuttiett, having examined the deceased, declared it to have been accidentally suffocated, for want of air, and the jury returned a verdict to that effect; but they cautioned the young mother, at the same time, to be cautious how she indulged herself in brandy drinking for the future, and more especially in the mornings.

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