

## Charles Henry Dowling

1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census

38 West-street, Carisbrooke, Newport, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England

Name	Relationship	Status	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Ann Mary Dowling	Head	Married	41	Wife of Master of Coasting vessel	Newport, IOW
Ellen K Dowling	Daughter	Single	16	Dressmakers's assistant	Newport, IOW
Kate Dowling	Daughter	Single	15	Dressmakers's assistant	Newport, IOW
<i>Charles H Dowling</i>	<i>Son</i>		<i>13</i>	<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Newport, IOW</i>
Annie M Dowling	Daughter		10	Scholar	Newport, IOW
Alice M M Dowling	Daughter		7	Scholar	Newport, IOW
George M Dowling	Son		3	Scholar	Newport, IOW

Isle of Wight County Press

3 September 1892

### ANOTHER BATHING FATALITY IN THE MEDINA.

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#### Brave Conduct of Schoolmates—A Proper Bathing Place Recommended

It was only last week that we chronicled a bathing fatality in the Medina at Medham, and it is now our painful duty to record yet another of these sad river tragedies, which occurred at Hurstake on Monday afternoon. The victim, in this instance, was Charles Dowling, aged 14, a bright and promising Newport Grammar School boy, and a member of St. Thomas's Church choir. On Tuesday morning, Mr. H. R. Hooper, B.A., deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Swan Hotel, Newport. Mr. Ald. I. Golden, superintendent of the St. Thomas's Church Sunday-school, of which the deceased was a member, was present at the inquiry. Mr. C. Odell was chosen foreman of the jury and the following evidence was adduced:—

Harry Dowling, father of deceased, said he was a master mariner, and lived at 38, West-street, Newport. He last saw his son (the deceased) alive on the previous day at 8.45 a.m. He was 14 on the 24th of last January. He was not positive that deceased could swim. He had said he could swim.—By a juror: Deceased was not one of the strongest. As a child he was subject to fits, but he had not had a fit, to witness's knowledge, for eleven years.

Henry Alfred Mew, aged 15, said that on the previous afternoon, he went with deceased, William Chiverton, George Morgan, and Charles Cowdery to bathe in the Medina. They got into the water opposite Hurstake, about half-past two. After they had been in the water a short time he saw deceased's face go under the water. Deceased did not cry out at all. As deceased was going down he seized William Chiverton by the arm and Chiverton swam with him with one hand a little way towards the shore and then deceased let go of Chiverton. Witness then swam to the place and caught hold of deceased's arm just as he was going down, and struck out in the direction of the shore with him. Deceased could swim a little—he was just learning. When he had got a little way deceased drew witness under water. After swimming another two strokes with deceased witness let go of him, as deceased being taller than witness, appeared to be on sure ground, and witness said to him "You stand here, Charlie, and you'll be all right". Witness

thought that he was all right, but as soon as he released his hold deceased seemed to dart under water and witness saw him no more till he was found dead. Witness and Chiverton shouted for assistance, and Mr. Sheaf came with his boat and net as quickly as possible from the other side of the river.—By the jury: He thought that deceased was touching the bottom with his feet when he let go of him. He did not speak at all. He did not appear to have anything the matter with him. He did not cling to witness. — Mr. Upton (a juror): The supposition was that he was fainting.

William Salter Chiverton said he was bathing with the deceased and the last witness on the afternoon in question. Deceased first caught hold of witness's arm and he swam towards the shore with him. Deceased was out of his depth. He appeared to be sinking and pulled witness. Witness shouted to Cowdery to come and assist, and he did so. Cowdery dived after deceased, but instead of getting hold of him he caught hold of witness's leg, and as they were both holding on to him, witness was obliged to make deceased let go of him as he was pulling him down. When witness came up he swam to shore and he did not again see Dowling alive.—By the jury: When deceased took hold of him, his eyes were closed and teeth "clenched".

Alfred Sheaf, a fisherman, living at Hurstake, said that at twenty minutes to three on Monday afternoon he heard cries for assistance proceeding from the opposite side of the river. He saw two boys in the water. He ran to his boat, threw in a net, and was on the spot where the boys were within 5 minutes of the alarm being given. There were several boys standing in the water, but he did not know them. He immediately inquired where the boy was who had gone under water and the boys pointed out a place. He dragged with his net for about 10 yards around the place pointed out, but did not find the body. The net was cast in the same place a second time, but unsuccessfully. On casting it in a different place, about 20 or 30 yards further out, he found the body. The tide was not running; it was high water at the time. He used every means to restore animation, but without avail. Deceased's mouth and nostrils were full of mud, showing that he had evidently settled down on the mud face downwards. There was no water in the body. There was no current and he should call the place a safe one for boys to bathe. Three-quarters of an hour elapsed from the time of the alarm till he recovered the body. It was not surprising to find the body 20 or 30 yards from the place where it was seen to sink.

The Deputy Coroner, in summing up, remarked that it was quite clear from the evidence that the very sad calamity was the result of a pure accident. Every effort seemed to have been put forth by the boys and Mr. Sheaf to save the poor lad from drowning.

A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned by the jury.

The Foreman said the jury were of opinion that a proper bathing place or house should be provided, which should be under supervision. Every year some fatality occurred to persons, especially boys, bathing in the river and yet nothing was done.

The Deputy-Coroner said the jury requested him to state that some notice should be taken of the prompt and brave services rendered by Mr. Sheaf, who always showed great bravery on such occasions, and though unsuccessful on that occasion, his services were none the less deserving of praise and recognition. The Deputy-Coroner specially mentioned a recent case in which Mr. Sheaf had been successful in saving the life of a young man—Mr. George Weeks—who was as nearly drowned as possible.

Mr. Upton (a juror) said that the plucky action of Mew, Cowdery, and Chiverton was deserving of great praise, especially in the case of Mew, who after the others had failed in their endeavours to save the drowning boy, did his best to rescue his comrade, and there was very little doubt that but for the supposed fainting of deceased, his efforts would have been crowned with success.

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The funeral of deceased took place on Thursday afternoon at Carisbrooke Cemetery, the Vicar of Newport (the Rev. Clement Smith) impressively officiating. The coffin, covered with beautiful floral wreaths, was borne to the Cemetery in a funeral car, and in addition to the parents and relations of the deceased, the funeral was attended by Mr. Ald. I. Golden, superintendent of the St. Thomas's Sunday-school, several masters and boys of the Newport Grammar School, a number of the members of the juvenile Lodge of Oddfellows, with Bros. T. Walden, C. Steel, R. A. Saunders, and J. Blake, and members of the St. Thomas's Church choir. At the grave the choir sang with solemn effect "Brief life is here our portion". Owing to the inclemency of the weather the Oddfellows service was not read over the grave.

*Transcription by Ian Roach for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries © 2021*  
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