James Gilbert

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SUDDEN DEATH OF AN EX-PRISON OFFICER AT NEWPORT.

The painfully sudden death of Mr. James Gilbert, aged 61, a retired prison officer, of Crichel, Elm-grove, Newport, occurred on Sunday afternoon in Nodehill. Mr. Gilbert, who retired from the prison service at Camp Hill with the rank of chief officer in 1931, had been medically attended at intervals since then, but had latterly appeared to be in the enjoyment of good health. At about 11 a.m. on Sunday he left home to visit his married daughter (Mrs. Harold Biles) at Forest-side, where he stayed to dinner. Later he read the newspapers and joined in games with the children. He left at about three o`clock to return home by a bus which arrived in St. James`s-square at 3.8. He left the vehicle to walk to his home via Upper St. James`s-street, and had proceeded as far as Messrs. J. E. Snellgrove and Son`s shop when he collapsed on the pavement. Aid was quickly forthcoming and Mr. Gilbert was carried into the shop, where Dr. A. A. Straton, who was summoned, could only pronounce life extinct. The facts were reported to the Deputy Coroner for the Island (F. A. Joyce, Esq.), who decided that an inquest was unnecessary.

The deceased, whose cheerful manner and kindly disposition endeared him to everyone, had a life-long connection with the prison service. His father the late Mr. Benjamin Hart Gilbert, served as an officer at H. M. Prison, Parkhurst, for many years. The deceased was apprenticed as a printer with the firm of Messrs. Yelf Bros., Newport. His father died when he was 16, and he gave up printing to enter the prison service. He started at Hull and was later appointed to Parkhurst, where he did duty for 30 years, rising to the rank of principal officer. He was transferred to Camp Hill as assistant chief officer when it was a preventive detention prison, and retired with the rank of chief officer. Upon his retirement he was presented with the long-service medal. He leaves a widow and three sons and three daughters.

The funeral service was held at St. John`s Church on Wednesday, the Vicar (the Rev. W. H. Mackinnon) officiating. Before and after the service Miss Dorothy Welby-Pryer, L. R. A. M. (organist), played “Blest are the departed” (Spohr) and “O rest in the Lord” (Mendelssohn). The hymn “God moves in a mysterious way” was sung. The family mourners were the widow, Mrs. A. Biles, Miss D. Gilbert and Mrs. Blackman (daughters), Messrs. B. Gilbert, R. Gilbert, and R. Gilbert, junior (sons), H. Biles and L. Blackman (sons-in-law), J. Hayles (brother-in-law), Mrs. M. Goslin (sister-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. E. Barton (brother-in-law and sister), Mr. and Mrs. W. Hayles (brother-in-law), Mr. H. Barton (nephew), and Messrs. L. Cooke, H. Taylor, and A. Fry, late chief officer, Parkhurst Prison. The following Prison officers acted as bearers : Principal Officer E. J. Bartlett, Hospital Principal Officer E. W. Smith, Principal Officer T. Davies, Principal Instructor A. Ponton, and Officers W. French, J. Parsons, and G. Smithers. The ex-officers who paid a last tribute of respect to an

esteemed colleague were Messrs. T. Stone, O.B.E., R. Thompson, H. Mayes, Riggs, Ellis, and Nicholls, and S. W. Layley and W. Walton (clerks). Among those also present were Messrs. A. E. Scott, the Governor of H.M. Prison, Parkhurst ; W. James, organist at Camp Hill Church ; S. Adney (Camp Hill), W. T. Collins (Pearl Assurance Co.), C. V. Cheverton and L. H. Morgan (Earl Yarborough Lodge of Oddfellows), and Mesdames Douglas Biles, Comer, Shepard, E. Cave, and C. Jones, and Miss K. Comer.

The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. O. C. Hamilton and Son. Messrs. W. H. Baker and G. R. Barrett, two old friends of the deceased, were unavoidably prevented from attending.---------Mrs. J. Gilbert and family wish to thank Dr. Straton for his kind and thoughtful attention, also all friends for expressions of sympathy and floral tributes. Will they please accept this as the only intimation.

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