

Kate Ellen Jacobs

Isle of Wight County Press – 23 February 1935

Fatal Result of a Fall at Newport.

The sad and sudden death of Mrs. Kate Ellen Jacobs, aged 79, occurred at her residence, 32 Clarence-road, Newport, yesterday (Friday), following a fall downstairs. At about 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Jacobs took a cup of tea to her companion, Miss Woods, who was confined to her bed suffering from the effects of a cold. On returning Mrs. Jacobs was heard to fall. Miss Woods immediately left her bed and was alarmed to find Mrs. Jacobs in a sitting position at the foot of the stairs. She knocked on the wall to summon assistance, and Mr. and Mrs. Pragnell, who live next door, were promptly on the scene and rendered aid. Dr. J. B. McKay was quickly summoned and attended to the injured woman. Just before 6 o'clock, as Mrs. Jacobs was being made comfortable for the night in a downstairs room, she suddenly passed away.

Isle of Wight County Press – 2 March 1935

Newport Widow's Fatal Fall.

The Acting Deputy Coroner (Dr. H. Y. Mansfield) held an inquiry at the Gospel-hall, Clarence-road, Newport, on Monday into the death of a widow, Kate Ellen Jacobs, 79, who, as reported last week, died on Friday week following an accidental fall downstairs at her home at 32 Clarence road.

Police-Inspector H. Randall was present.

Mrs. Alice Jane Cooper, of 3 Sidney-villas, Wilton Park-road, Shanklin, a sister, gave evidence of identification. She said Mrs. Jacobs was the widow of George Henry Jacobs, a gardener, of Ventnor, who died over 40 years ago. She saw her early in the year when she spent 10 days with witness at Shanklin. She was then in good health.

Miss Helen Woods, whose evidence was taken at the house as she was indisposed, stated that she had lived with Mrs. Jacobs since August last. On Thursday week witness had to take to her bed with a chill and Mrs. Jacobs was looking after her. On Friday afternoon at about 3 o'clock she brought witness up a cup of tea and had one herself while they were chatting in the bedroom. Mrs. Jacobs then picked up the two cups and left to go downstairs. Witness heard her fall, and on going to the top of the stairs saw her in a sitting position at the bottom. She tried to help her to her feet but Mrs. Jacobs said "Leave me alone," and she then tapped the wall to summon help from Mr. and Mrs. Pragnell, who lived next door. They came at once. Mrs. Jacobs was assisted to a chair in the sitting-room. Deceased's sight was not very good, but otherwise she had enjoyed fairly good health. She had only once heard her complain of giddiness.

Mrs. Emily Pragnell, of 33 Clarence-road, described how she and her husband, on entering the house in response to the knocks, found the deceased sitting at the bottom of the stairs with two smashed cups and saucers lying on the floor. In reply to witness's question as to what had happened she replied "I must have fallen downstairs," but she made no further remark about the accident, although she was then conscious. Witness summoned a doctor and remained with the deceased until she passed away at about 6 p.m.

Dr. J. B. McKay said that when he arrived at the house at 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Jacobs was completely unconscious. He secured some restoratives from his surgery, and as deceased showed some signs of improvement, although still unconscious, he left. When he called again at 6 p.m. Mrs. Jacobs had just breathed her last. He purposely refrained from examining her before owing to her collapsed condition, but on examining the body he was surprised to find that no bones were broken and there were no evidences of the fall except a slight bruise on the right knee and a scratch on the wrist. Death was evidently due to the shock of the fall. Deceased suffered from curvature of the spine, and her sight was very bad.

P.C. E. Rushen said he had examined the stairs, but could find nothing which might have caused the deceased to fall except that they were rather steep, and the absence of a window on the landing made them dark.

Dr. Mansfield said he had no hesitation in returning a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, viz., that death was due to shock following an accidental fall downstairs.

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