

Iris Mae Knight

Isle of Wight County Press 6 April 1940

NEWPORT CHILD KILLED IN STREET ACCIDENT.

LORRY DRIVER EXONERATED.

A child's tricycle with a slightly buckled right rear wheel was a pathetic exhibit at the inquest at the Guildhall, Newport, on Thursday on Iris May Knight, the 5-years-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Knight, of 20 Orchard-street, Newport. The child was riding the machine on Monday when she met her death. The father, who is serving in the B.E.F., had special leave from France to attend the inquest, conducted by R. E. A. Webster Esq., the acting Deputy Coroner. Mr. G. S. Green appeared for John Henry Trott, the driver of a lorry which passed at the time. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death due to the tricycle slipping off the kerb and throwing the child off, and the driver of the lorry was exonerated from blame, the foreman of the jury, Mr. B. Jolliffe, remarking that there was the plain evidence of two children that they saw the tricycle slip.

Mr. Lillian Winifred Waldlock, of 25 Orchard-street, identified the body

Eileen Baker, a 12-years-old girl, of 12, Hillside-terrace, Newport, said that at 12.15 p.m. on Monday she was outside 14 Orchard-street, opposite the corner where the accident happened. She saw deceased riding the tricycle and was just going to tell her to be careful not to go on the road as she went round the corner when the right back wheel slipped off the pavement and she fell off. A red lorry came round the corner at the same time.

By Mr. Green: She saw Iris fall into the road, but not into any part of the lorry, which went on a little way. Ann Rogers, a girl of 3, was with Iris.

Alan James Tibbles, aged 10, of 14, Orchard-street, said he saw the accident from the window of his home. The right rear wheel of the tricycle slipped off the pavement and threw Iris into the road.- By the Foreman: The lorry had passed when he saw Iris fall.- By Inspector Willmott: He did not see her strike the lorry at all.

The lorry driver, who lives in Queen's-road, Freshwater, and is employed by Messrs. Westmores, of Newport, said he had negotiated one right-angle bend and the accident was at another bend on the road to South-street. His speed was five miles an hour. He saw Iris Knight on the tricycle and Ann Rogers with her; they were going in the same direction as he was and were about three yards from the corner. He pulled well out to the right so as to bring his rear wheels as he turned clear of the corner, and the first he knew that anything had happened was when his mate said he thought the little girl had fallen off the tricycle.

The Coroner: Did you feel anything hit the lorry? - Nothing at all.

Mr. Green: Were there any marks on the lorry? No.

Inspector Willmott pointed out smudges of grease on the wheels of the tricycle and asked Trott if they were not pointed out to him at the Police Station as similar to the grease on the hub of the wheel.- Trott agreed with this.- Inspector Willmott said he was not suggesting

that Trott struck the child, but the tricycle was probably hit.- By Mr. Green: The hub was about 15in. from the ground and the tricycle must have been tipped up for the hub to touch it.- The Foreman suggested that if the tricycle turned over it would have been the left wheel which would have been hit.

After the jury had viewed the lorry corroborative evidence was given by Robert Young, of Marlborough-road, Ryde, who was sitting beside the previous witness. He heard what he thought was the noise of the tricycle turning over, but he did not feel any impact as if the lorry might have hit anything. The hooter was sounded at each corner.

Dr A. H. Bruce said the cause of death was a fractured base of the skull. It was not necessarily a severe blow.

The Coroner: Do you think that falling on the roadway like that would cause a fractured skull? - I think it possible.

Mr. Green: If the child had fallen against the hub of the lorry wheel as it revolved would you expect any special signs? - I should expect lacerations and I found none.

Nora Kathleen Rogers, of 48 Orchard-street, mother of 3-years-old Ann Rogers, who was with deceased, said her child asked if Iris could have a ride on the tricycle and, after hesitation, she agreed so long as they kept to the pavement. Two or three minutes later Ann came back and told her of the accident. The tricycle was overhauled four or five weeks ago and when it left her house was in proper working order.

P.C. Kelly said the lorry hub was recessed into the wheel three inches. The grease on it was similar to that on the buckled wheel of the tricycle, but he could not explain how the grease came on the tricycle. There was some grease on the hem of the deceased's coat. - Witness agreed that it might have come from anywhere.

After announcing the jury's verdict the Foreman expressed sympathy with the child's parents, and the Coroner and Mr. Green associated themselves with his remarks.

Transcription by Kate MacDonell for the Friends of Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries,
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