

John Malcolm Montgomery

1911 census, 6 Edward St, Ryde, Isle of Wight

<i>John Montgomery</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>Compositor</i>	<i>Greenhithe, Kent,</i>
Ellen Montgomery	Wife	40		Haylands, I.W.
Jennett Montgomery	Sister	37	Manageress Railway	Ryde, Isle of Wight
			Refreshment Rooms	
John Montgomery	Son	15	House Agents Clerk	Ryde, I.W.
Leslie Montgomery	Son	8		Ryde, I.W.

Isle of Wight County Press 19 January 1918

MUNITION WORKER ACCIDENTALLY ASPHYXIATED.

On Wednesday the Deputy Coroner (F. A. Joyce, Esq.) concluded the inquiry at the Town-hall, East Cowes, into the death of John Malcolm Montgomery, aged 51, of 3 Lukely-terrace, Lugley-street, Newport, fitter's labourer and greaser at Messrs. S. E. Saunders and Co.'s Columbine Works, East Cowes, who was found in a dying condition in the annealing-room at those works on the 5th inst. Mr. A. F. J. Dunolly, H.M. inspector of factories, was present, Mr. J. C. W. Damant represented Messrs. Saunders and Co., Ltd., and the widow and soldier son of deceased also attended.

Dr. Edgar Hoffmeister said that on making a post-mortem examination he found a very bright cherry red staining of the skin on the front of the neck, chest, and back, the vessels of the surface of the brain were infected and brighter than usual, the mucous membrane of the trachea was also very red, and the lungs were engorged and frothy. These bright appearances were characteristic of carbonic oxide poisoning, which could have arisen from the products of gas combustion in the annealing oven. He attributed death to asphyxia from carbonic oxide poisoning. Dr. Mayo, who assisted him at the post-mortem, concurred in his conclusions.

Alfred J. Stickley, Ryde, acetylene welder, recalled, said, in reply to Mr. Damant, that deceased complained in the morning of feeling rough. He kept the oil used for the machinery in the annealing-room. He considered that deceased went to the annealing-room to get hot water for dinner. There was a canteen at Messrs. Saunders, but in each shop the men got hot water from an urn provided in those shops.

Harold Howard, foreman fitter, in charge of the annealing-room, said that he left the annealing oven in full working order to go to dinner at 12.45, the door being left ajar and the two windows open in the room. At about 2.55 he found the door, which had a Yale spring lock, closed, and also the windows. A man got through the window, and when the

door was opened he saw deceased lying on his face on the floor, his head being against one of the legs of the oven. The gas in the oven had been turned out. There was a stuffiness in the room, but no heavy escape of the gas.

By H. M. Inspector : There was a 9in. flue pipe to carry off the products of combustion, carbonic oxide and carbonic acid gas, neither of which would be smelt, into the open air. There was a slide valve in the flue, by which they regulated the heat. He left the valve half open. In exceptional cases it had been completely shut off. There would be nothing to prevent the fumes from coming into the room.----Q. If the valve or flue is partly closed, part of the fumes would go into the room ? ----It depends upon the heat given out by the gas.

By the Coroner : The windows were always left open, and sometimes the door. He did not know if it was the usual thing in the case of a damper to have a 2in. hole so that it would be impossible to shut it off completely. An inspector of factories inspected the premises six or seven weeks before that. He had experienced no inconvenience from fumes in the room. He had been there for two years. He had heard that deceased had been in the room previously. There was no seat in the room. Deceased would only have occasion to go into the room for oil. From the position in which deceased was found it was evident he went there to be in the warm to have his food; his dinner basket was on the floor and his cap on the top.

By the Inspector : If the windows were kept open there was a reasonable amount of ventilation.

By the Coroner : It was a great danger to be in the room with the door and windows shut. He should say the temperature when he first went in was from 130 to 140 degrees.

By Mr. Damant : A bar had to be released before deceased could shut the door. No one stayed in the annealing-room.

By the Coroner : There were no regulations or notices prohibiting workers from going into the room, which was used as a store for waste tube.

George Hy. Flux, 21 South Mall, Newport, labourer at the Columbine Works, proved finding deceased as described. He turned him over and said "John, what are you doing here?" Deceased was not able to speak, and there was a rattling in the throat.

By H.M. Inspector : He did not smell gas, but the temperature was very hot.

By Mr. Damant : Deceased had a cold and said he should go to bed on returning home.

By the Coroner : He had occasionally had his dinner in the annealing-room on oiling days.

Bertie P. Thorlby, fitter, said he went into the room a few minutes after deceased had been found, and finding the oven alight turned off the gas.

By H.M. Inspector : The slide valve of the flue was half open.

The jury returned a verdict that deceased was accidentally asphyxiated by carbonic oxide poisoning, and, through the Foreman, Mr. Pearson, expressed sympathy with the widow and other relatives.

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