

Emma Annie Welham / Isabella Eleanor Benstead

**Isle of Wight County Press
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NEWPORT

Townsmen's Double Bereavement. — An inquest was held at 179 Carisbrooke-road on Wednesday on Mrs. Isabella Eleanor Benstead, who died on Tuesday following a fall downstairs on Monday. Her sister, Mrs Welham, died earlier the same day, apparently as the result of her exertions in helping Mrs. Benstead back to her room after her fall. Mrs. Welham was the wife of Mr. E. S. Welham, formerly manager of Burton's Stores, and an ex-captain of the Newport Golf Club. Mrs. Benstead, who was 86 years of age, was the widow of Mr. S. Benstead, formerly the proprietor of the Alliance Hotel, Southampton.

The Deputy Coroner (R. E. A. Webster, Esq.) held the inquiry and P.S. Davis represented the police. Dr. C. K. Sylvester said he was called to the house at 5.30 a.m. on Tuesday morning and was informed that Mrs. Benstead had fallen downstairs. He examined and spoke to her, and she seemed quite normal. She complained of pain and tenderness on the outside of the right knee, but otherwise she was quite comfortable. He examined her leg and could not find any break. Deceased had been a patient of his for some years, suffering from diabetes in a severe form, which caused her to be emaciated. He called again at 3 p.m. on the same day and she was then dead. He then found the left leg fractured in the middle of the tibia. He was told that she was found on the floor, and formed the conclusion that she probably got out of bed and her leg gave way under her.

In answer to the Deputy Coroner witness agreed that deceased's diabetic condition hastened her end. She had had to be helped about for several years. Edmund Stone Welham said the deceased, his sister-in-law, lived with him for 13 or 14 years. Until a fortnight ago she got about and could go up and down stairs.

On Monday she went to bed at about 4.30, and his wife took her up a cup of milk at about 8 p.m. About 3.30 a.m. next morning his wife woke him and asked if he could hear guns. He listened and heard three thuds. He went to see what was the matter, and found deceased lying at the bottom of the stairs. He called his wife and together they lifted her and took her upstairs to her room. She did not speak at the time, but later told his wife that she had fallen downstairs. About 8 o'clock next morning he took her a cup of tea and bread and butter, and she then said she was all right. He went out in the morning, and on returning at about 12.30 p.m. went upstairs and found her dead, lying on the floor by the side of the bed. It looked as though she might have fallen out of bed.

The Deputy Coroner said he was sorry he had had to hold an inquest, but he had to do so owing to the fall. He returned a verdict that "deceased died from shock following an accidental fall, complicated by severe diabetes". He expressed sympathy with Mr. Welham in the sad loss of his wife and sister-in-law on the same day. As Dr. Sylvester was able to give a certificate in the case of Mrs. Welham no inquest was necessary. Mrs. Benstead was buried at Southampton.

Mrs. Welham's funeral was on Thursday at Carisbrooke Cemetery, following a service in Carisbrooke Church, the Vicar (the Rev. H. Ewbank, R.D.) officiating. In addition to Mr. Welham, those attending included Ald. J. H. Deacon, Mr. J. Oliver, Mr. and Mrs. J. Dufton, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Hookey, Mrs. Nettleton, Mr. and Mrs. A. Scott, Mr. F. Burton, Mr. G. Matthews, Mrs. E. Earley, Mr. C. Cowdery, and H. Phillips. Floral tributes were sent by her sorrowing husband and the boys in New Zealand, Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Tomlinson and Joan; Mr. and Mrs. F. Burton and the staff of Burton's Stores; Mr. and Mrs. A. Scott; Mr. and Mrs. Hookey and Mr. and Mrs. Chard; Major and Mrs. G. Giddens; Mr. and Mrs.

G. Matthews; John Oliver; Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Earley, Leslie, and Gladys; Mr. and Mrs. E. Miller; Mrs. Lodge; Mr. and Mrs. H. Pace, Totton; and Mr. and Mrs. Eric Higginbotham.

Mr. E. S. Welham deeply appreciates the kindness of those who sent messages of sympathy and floral tributes. Will they kindly accept this acknowledgement.

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