

William Comer

Isle of Wight County Press - 17 September 1898

NEWPORT

AN INJURED LEG.- A foreman at Parkhurst Forest named Wm. Comer, lodging at Hunnyhill, had his leg severely twisted as the result of the slipping over of some timber on Monday. He was attended by Dr. Groves and removed to the Royal I. W. Infirmary in the ambulance wagon in charge of Messrs. J. R. Hayles and F. Peach, Supt. Lawes and Mr. Barkshire also rendering assistance.

Isle of Wight County Press - 23 January 1936

DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM COMER, OF NEWPORT.

A WELL KNOWN TIMBER MERCHANT.

Much regret is felt, especially among those connected with the timber trade in the Island, at the sudden death at his residence, Forest Side, Newport, on Sunday, of Mr. William Comer. Mr. Comer paid his customary visit to Newport on Saturday evening and, although he had difficulty in returning owing to indisposition, he appeared to be fairly comfortable on retiring to bed, but passed away at about 4.30 a.m.

A West of England man, he had been known in the timber trade for over 55 years. At first he assisted his father, who was the travelling manager for Messrs. Bowerman, of Bridgewater. He superintended the cutting down of timber on the Duke of Buccleuch's estate in Scotland and his duties for the firm took him to many counties of England. Thirty eight years ago Mr. Comer set up a sawmill for Messrs. Bowerman in Parkhurst Forest. During their second season a stack of timber fell on him, and after that he was never able to bend his left leg. He then started in business for himself, and a saw mill was set up in Parkhurst Forest. Later the present Forest Side Saw Mills were established, and the business has continued there and will be carried on by the family. Mr. Comer was a recognised expert in the home-grown timber trade. Few men knew better than he the art of sawing and the worth of a tree, and few had a greater love for the beauty of trees. He was a great lover of the countryside and often was among the first to report to the *County Press* the arrival of the nightingale. The last three years had brought him increasing disability, but few people were aware of this, as his pluck and endurance were remarkable and his death came as a great shock to his many friends. Mr. Comer was recently the subject of an article in *Town and Country News* entitled "Half a century of the timber trade." The article contained some excellent photographs of his saw mills and said: "It is an interesting business in that its proprietor, Mr. William Comer, has been in the timber trade for no less than 50 years, and can probably claim to be its 'grand old man.' In view, however, of the energy and vigour with which he still directs it, one is tempted rather to refer to him as the 'grand young man.'" He was also a successful dairyman and apiarist.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, the first part of the service being held in the Quay-street Methodist Church, Newport. The Rev. J. Higman (minister) officiated and Mr. W. G. Bartlett at the organ accompanied the singing of the deceased's favourite hymns "Abide with me" and "Rock of ages." The chief mourners were Mrs. Comer (widow), Messrs. R. J., and M. Comer (sons), the Misses A., D., and E. Comer (daughters), Mr. M. Bridgman (brother-in-law), Mrs. J. Comer (daughter-in-law), Mrs. R. Sheaff, Miss D. Brown, Miss F. Dyer, Mr. and Mrs. R. Partridge, and Messrs. R. Sheaff, O. Moorman and H. Rackett. Those also present included Mr. and Mrs. W. Turnham, Mr. and Mrs. C. Jones, Mr. W. D. W. Buckell, Mesdames Woodall, A. and E. James, H. Biles, Hibberd, and W. G. Cooper, Miss Norman, Miss D. Gilbert, and Messrs. T. Cass, P. Croucher, B. Gilbert, J. G. Truscott, A. Barton, and J. Head. The interment followed at Carisbrooke Cemetery.

Mr. R. May, of Yarmouth was the undertaker.

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

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