

Mary Ann Cooper

Isle of Wight County Press – 16 May 1931

The Late Miss M. A. Cooper, of Newport

The funeral of Miss Cooper, whose sudden death yesterday (Friday) week was reported to the deputy coroner, who did not consider an inquest necessary in view of the medical report, took place on Tuesday at Carisbrooke Cemetery, the Rev. D. Hendy Davies (Congregational) officiating. In a tribute to her life and work he said that the sudden and unexpected death of Miss Cooper had removed a familiar figure from their midst. She was a native of Newport, where she spent all her life. She was beloved by a large circle of friends for her transparent and serene nature and for her guileless and childlike disposition. Being frank and honest as the day she never put her light under a bushel. What she believed she declared openly and gave undivided loyalty to any cause to which she attached herself. In politics she was a Liberal by conviction, and many years was one of the most active and prominent workers for Liberalism in Newport, if not, indeed, in the whole Island. She possessed a strong individuality, thinking her own thoughts, moulding her own beliefs, and living her own life. To the convictions she arrived at she remained true to the last. Although for many years she lived alone in her own home, she never lost interest in the common life. Into the wider circles she would sally forth alert, zealous, eager to take her share and do her part. And this she did with a humorous light-heartedness which was as natural to her as song was to a bird or fragrance was to a flower. For over half a century she was a teacher at the Nodehill Sunday-school, and although she was not in active service in recent years she still retained a deep interest in the work, being on the list of "occasional teachers," and until lately acting as district visitor for the I.W. Sunday-school Union. With similar devotion she served as member of the Ladies' Committee in connection with the Poor-law Institution, Parkhurst, for over a quarter of a century, and for a like period acted as a collector for the Coal Club in the town. The centre of her life, however, was the Congregational Church in St. James's-street. It was her spiritual home throughout the long years of her life. Her heart was there and she was never happier than when she was rendering some service or other to her beloved church. For a long period she represented the church at the meetings of the southern district of the Hants Congregational Union, and for a number of years was appointed delegate to the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Her proficiency in shorthand was a real asset to her in these assemblies, and the reports of the various meetings which she used to give to the church were always looked forward to with avidity. She had a rare gift of description, and her natural wit and humour filled her reports with sparkling originality. She was also treasurer to the Women's Guild, and it was seldom she was absent from its gatherings on Tuesday afternoons. When they remembered her great faithfulness and deep devotion to the worship and work of the church on Sundays and weekdays it would be a strange experience to be without her radiant presence. Her smiling face and happy voice would be missed for many a day. Deep sympathy was felt with Mr. F. Cooper, her only brother, and with the nephews and nieces in their sorrow. The mourners were Mr. F. Cooper (brother), Mr. G. Cooper (nephew), Mrs. Cooper (niece), Mrs. Knott and Miss Hayles. There were also present Mr. H. M. Williams, J.P., and Mrs. Williams, Mr. F. E. Witcher, J.P., and Mrs. Witcher, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Harrison, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Hayles, and Mesdames J. Dufton, Hendy Davies, B. Sanders, G. Morris, W. Upward, J. Flux. Launder, and Head, and the Misses Snellgrove and Upton. Mr. F. Baker represented the I.W. Liberal Association (of which the deceased had been a vice-president), and Mrs. Baker (the Newport Women's Liberal Association), of which the deceased had formerly been secretary.... The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. H. and F. Damp. One of her nephews, Mr. Fred Cooper, designer of "Miss England II," was prevented from attending through absence in Italy in connection with the further attempt by Kaye Don on the world's speed record won by "Miss England II."

Transcription by Tony Barton for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries © 2019

<https://www.foncc.org.uk>

4 October 2019