

**Frank Damp**

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**DEATH OF MR. FRANK DAMP,  
OF NEWPORT**

**EX-MAYOR AND PROMINENT BUSINESS MAN**

Newport lost one of its most esteemed residents on Sunday by the death of Mr. Frank Damp, of Hollybank, Medina-avenue, who passed away following a very long and painful illness, borne with great fortitude, after a life of notable usefulness in his native borough.

The late Mr. Damp, who was in his 72nd year, was the proprietor of the well known firm of Messrs. H. and F. Damp, builders and undertakers, of 61 Pyle-street, founded by his father, James Damp, in 1877. For many years after his father's death Mr. Frank Damp carried it on in partnership with his brother Harry, who left for Canada and died there about 10 years ago. Since then he had been assisted in the business by his two sons, Messrs F. and C. Damp. In his business life he won an enviable reputation for integrity and sound workmanship, combining a wide practical experience with faithful execution in keeping with the highest traditions of the building trade. Many good class residential premises and modernised business houses stand as memorials of his skill and thoroughness, while on the undertaking side of the business his activities were marked by that kindly consideration and sympathetic outlook which were the outstanding features of his character, and which won him the true esteem of all associates. Though ever ready to adopt worthy modern ideas in building, he was very anxious to preserve the beauty and interest of old buildings, and no job gave him more delight than the careful renovation of some ancient structure. Consequently he had been entrusted with many works in the old manor houses of the Island.

It was not until rather late in life that he was persuaded to enter public life, but during the last 10 years he had rendered his native town yeoman service as a councillor, and a representative of the Council on other public bodies. He was first elected to the Town Council in February, 1927, as a representative of the South Ward, on the death of Mr. R. C. Gray, and in 1933, on the extension of the borough, he became a representative of the Pan Ward and continued as such until his retirement owing to ill-health last year. During the mayoralty of the late Mr. J. L. Mitchell, who was his close friend, Mr. Damp acted as his deputy, and following Mr. Mitchell's death at the end of September, 1934, Mr. Damp was, on October 10th, elected mayor, but owing to the state of his health, he was unable to continue in office after the completion of the mayoral year on the following November 9th. He therefore had the unique distinction in the history of the borough of having been mayor for a month only. Doubtless that would not have been the case had his health been good as his colleagues would have been delighted further to honour him by re-election, and he would assuredly have made an ideal chief magistrate. His technical knowledge and sound judgment were of great value to the public bodies on which he served and he was always ready to give advice. It was not often that he took part in debates, but whenever he spoke it was invariably to make some very sensible, moderate, and helpful suggestion. He did good work on various committees of the Council, particularly the Housing and Sanitary committees, being the chairman of the latter committee for two years. He represented the Council on the I.W. Joint Hospital Board, of which he was chairman in 1933, on the County Assessment Committee, on the Borough Education Committee, on the Newport and Gatcombe Joint Burial Committee (chairman 1933-34), and on the Island Council for the Preservation of Rural England. His helpful interest in the Isolation Hospital at Fairlee was greatly appreciated by his colleagues.

He was one of the numerous old scholars of the Church of England Schools who have gained distinction in the business and public life of Newport and by his passing the Island Baptist community loses a stalwart. He had been closely associated with the Castlehold Baptist Church, Newport from childhood, and had served it faithfully as Sunday-school teacher, deputy-superintendent of the Sunday-school, hon. treasurer, and deacon. Last year, in recognition of these notable services, he was given the rare honour of being elected a life deacon of the church. He was also hon-treasurer of the I.W. Baptist Union and president of that organisation in 1929. He was a member of the Newport Charity Trustees, particularly interested in the control of the ancient Grammar School, and a founder member of the Rotary Club.

Mr. Damp had not enjoyed good health for about 4 years and he had been bed ridden for a year. In addition to his two sons he leaves a widow (formerly Miss Colenutt, daughter of the late Mr. C. Colenutt, of Lower St. James's-street) and two daughters, and sincere sympathy is felt with the family in their bereavement.

#### THE FUNERAL

The funeral service at the Castlehold Baptist Church on Thursday was attended by a large congregation and many signs of mourning were displayed in the town out of respect to the memory of an esteemed Newportonian, whose family can trace over a century's connection with the borough. The mourners were Miss W. J. Damp and Miss M. R. Damp (daughters), Mr. F. H. J. and Mr. C. P. Damp (sons), Mrs. F. H. J. Damp and Mrs. C. P. Damp (daughters-in-law), Mr. W. M. Daniel and Mr. Percy Colenutt (brothers-in-law) and Mr. Charles Colenutt (nephew), Messrs. A. W. Abraham and W. H. Croucher, Mesdames J. L. Mitchell, E. G. Keed, and R. G. Thomas, Mrs. Appel, and Mrs. F. Rogers (nurses).

*(family mourners given only)*

The coffin of unpolished oak with oxidized silver fittings was borne by the following employees of the firm of Messrs. H. and F. Damp, Messrs. A. Morris, W. Chiverton, W. Matthews, and H. Dennes. Other employees present were Messrs. H. Shepard, A. Sims, R. Mowbray, V. Jacobs, W. Denham, A. Downer, E. Plucknett, F. Russell, F. Brett, A. Lockhart, G. Stark, B. Early, J. Gallop, A. Curtis, F. Barrett, F. Colson, R. Taylor, and F. Rees, and F. Dear and J. Toogood (former employee).

The service was conducted by the Rev. E. G. Keed, assisted by the Revs. R.G. Thomas and M. Lister Gaunt. The hymns sung were "God of the living" and "Still, still with Thee". The Rev. R. G. Thomas read portions of Scripture. An able and sympathetic address was given by the Rev. E. G. Keed, who said they had gathered to pay their last tribute of affectionate respect to the memory of a fine Christian gentleman, a devoted officer of that church, and a most loved citizen of Newport. To give humble thanks to Almighty God for his life and services, and to express their deepest sympathy with his bereaved widow and family. The service ended with prayers and the Benediction pronounced by the Rev. E. G. Keed. Mrs. W. R. Pilcher, who was at the organ, played "O for the wings of a dove", "O rest in the Lord", Mendelssohn's Funeral March, and "I know that my Redeemer liveth" (Handel). The interment was at Carisbrooke Cemetery.

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