

John Raynes Deacon

1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census

25, St. James' Square, Newport, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England

Name	Relationship	Status	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
<i>John R. Deacon</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Widower</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>Draper</i>	<i>Chale, IOW</i>
John H. Deacon	Son	Single	20	Draper's assistant	Newport, IOW
Charlotte Westmore	Servant	Single	22	General servant	Kingston, IOW

Isle of Wight County Press

29 August 1896

SUDDEN DEATH OF MR. J. R. DEACON, J.P. , OF NEWPORT.

It is our sad duty to-day to record the death of Mr. John Raynes Deacon, J.P., of Newport, which took place on Thursday night with distressing suddenness at the age of 62. The deceased gentleman, who was apparently in the best of health and spirits, had on the day of his death attended the usual fortnightly meeting of the I.W. Guardians, of which he was vice-chairman, and later in the afternoon, accompanied by a friend, he drove to Fairfields Farm, near Niton, where his son-in-law and daughter, the Rev. W. E. Sellers (Wesleyan minister of Richmond) and Mrs. Sellers, were spending a holiday with their family. He reached Fairfields about tea-time and spent the evening there, devoting himself a great deal to the children, as he was wont to do, joining them in cricket and other games. Supper was partaken of about 8 o'clock, and an hour later Mr. Deacon began to make preparations for the home journey. He proceeded with his son-in-law to the stable for his horse, and was busily engaged in getting the harness when his son-in-law temporarily left the stable to light the lamp, at the request of Mr. Deacon. On returning in about two minutes Mr. Sellers heard a kind of hissing noise, and thinking that Mr. Deacon might be jocularly imitating the habit of the hostler when grooming a horse, called out "What are you doing?" Receiving no reply, Mr. Sellers went to the spot with a light and found Mr. Deacon lying at full length near the horse. He had just time to unfasten his collar and raise his head before Mr. Deacon heaved a last heavy sigh and expired. Scarcely more than three minutes could have elapsed from the time Mr. Deacon left the house till death ensued. A messenger was immediately sent for medical assistance, and Dr. Groves, deceased's medical attendant, arrived about midnight and certified death to be due to syncope. Under these circumstances the formalities of an inquest were dispensed with. Deceased's only ailment of late seems to have been slight indigestion, which did not lead him to consult his doctor, whose attendance he had not required for the last four or five years. Naturally Mr. and Mrs. Sellers and the family are prostrated with grief, and a very painful impression was created in Newport when the sad news became known.

A native of Chale, the deceased, when a young man, removed to Newport, where he commenced his well-known drapery business some 40 years ago, after having been employed in connection with the business of the late Mr. C. Dore. The late Mr. Deacon was a familiar figure in many walks of public life. He was a man of great natural energy and activity, and it may be literally said of him that he died in harness. As already stated, only a few hours before his death he was engaged in the assiduous performance of his duty as a representative of Newport at the Board of Guardians, and on the day prior to his decease he was lending kindly aid to the Wesleyan Church at Sandown, where he attended for the purpose of opening a bazaar held with the objective of clearing off a debt on the chapel and Sunday-schools. In Methodist circles in the Isle of Wight he was widely known and respected. In 1850 he joined the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Newport, where he was the leading lay representative of Wesleyan

Methodism, and for the last 44 years had been connected with the work of the Victoria Wesleyan Sunday-school, of which he had been superintendent for about 34 years. A devoted friend of children, his connection with Sunday-school work was ever a source of peculiar pleasure to him as it was beneficial to the schools. He was a circuit steward and a trustee of some dozen chapels in the Island. On four occasions he had been elected by the Portsmouth district as a representative to the annual Conference of the Wesleyan connexion, and he was one of the representatives attending the recent Liverpool Conference from this district. For nearly 20 years the late Mr. Deacon was identified with municipal affairs, having rendered very useful and conscientious service as a member of the Corporation, only two Councillors of that body being his seniors. His connection with the Board of Governors dates back to 1876, and his long and faithful service in the interest of the poor was acknowledged shortly after the Board came into office by his election to the vice-chairmanship of that body. In the early part of last year he received the honour of being appointed a magistrate for the borough of Newport, and he was a pretty regular attendant at the Bench. Philanthropic institutions in the town benefited by his active and kindly assistance, and for a number of years he was the hon. treasurer and also a collector of the Newport Benevolent Society. As a politician he was a thoroughgoing Liberal, and he will be greatly missed by the party with whom he was so long and consistently identified. He was also an ardent temperance worker and a firm and earnest advocate of the principles which he held so dear and which he was especially anxious to promote amongst the young. By his death Newport loses one of its most respected citizens, one of its most useful public men, and yet keener will be the sense of loss felt by those who knew him intimately in the relationships of private and social life. Difficult indeed will it be for them to realise that his pleasant smile, his genial presence, his happy influence are for ever withdrawn from human scenes. His wife predeceased him several years ago, and the remaining members of his family—his daughter and son—and other relatives have the sincerest sympathy of the community in their irreparable bereavement.

The anniversary services of the Newport Wesleyan Sunday-school were fixed for to-morrow (Sunday), the Rev. W. E. Sellers being announced to preach the sermons, but owing to the lamented death of the superintendent, who was announced to speak at the public meeting, the services have been abandoned and other arrangements will be made. The funeral takes place on Tuesday afternoon at Carisbrooke Cemetery, a short service being first held at 2.30 in the chapel of Newport.

Isle of Wight County Press
12 August 1896

THE LATE MR. JOHN. R. DEACON, J.P.

In connection with the lamented death of Mr. John. R. Deacon, J.P., a special memorial service was on Sunday evening last held at the Newport Wesleyan Church, where, as an almost life-long worshipper and a very active worker in various organisations of the church, his loss is especially deplored. Naturally there was a crowded congregation, including Methodists from outside of the town, while the scholars of the Victoria Wesleyan Sunday-school, of which the departed was the successful and greatly loved superintendent for the last 34 years, occupied the gallery. The service throughout was solemnly impressive, appropriate Scripture readings and hymns being used. The Rev. W. H. Milward occupied the pulpit, which was still heavily draped with black, and preached from the text "For he was a faithful man, and feared God above many", a text which he thought eminently represented the life and work of their lamented friend, who sacrificed ease and oftentimes comfort in order to serve his fellow men. At the close of his sermon he read an interesting memorial sketch of the life of the late Mr. Deacon, written by a member of the family who knew him so well. The writer dwelt first on the deceased's attachment to the Island, where he was born, and lived and died, and said that so closely were its people and interests twined round his heart that he was seldom away from home and then only for a short time. Singularly

enough, on the day of his death he visited Chale, where he was born, and died within two miles of his old home. The sketch proceeded to make eulogistic reference to deceased's many estimable qualities in public and private life, the leading features of which have already been dwelt upon in our columns, and specially acknowledged his valued labours on behalf of Wesleyan Methodism, particularly as superintendent of the Sunday-school there, for which his great love of children so admirably fitted him. There was no scheme of Methodist extension in the Island which did not have his practical sympathy and help. One of the best known public men of the Island, he was one of the oldest members of the Corporation of Newport and the Board of Guardians, and his recent appointment as vice-chairman of the latter was referred to as a mark of confidence and esteem which he much valued. As a borough magistrate he discharged his duties faithfully and well. If the poor of the town had to be visited he was the one appointed for that purpose, as he knew every house and inmate. As treasurer of the Newport Benevolent Society he was associated with the various schemes for the relief of the poor, and many were his acts of personal benevolence. "Was he not a faithful man fearing God above many?" remarked the preacher, in conclusion. Let them pray that some one would be found to fill his place and continue his good and noble work. As the congregation dispersed the choir and children sang deceased's favourite hymn, "Jesu, lover of my soul".

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