

## **Robert Charles Gray**

**Isle of Wight County Press – 3 January 1931**

### **Death of Mr. R. C. Gray, of Newport**

Widespread regret and sympathy with his widow and family were aroused at Newport yesterday (Friday), when it became known that one of the ancient borough's best known business men, Mr. Robert Charles Gray, tent-maker and waterproof merchant, had passed away suddenly at his residence, Braeside, Cypress-road. Mr. Gray, who was only 53 years of age, had suffered from heart trouble for some years, his ill-health causing him some time ago to relinquish most of the public work in which he had shown much enthusiasm and ability. He had, however, only been confined to the house for a day or two and his death, following a sudden heart attack early yesterday morning, came as a great shock to all who knew him, and profound sympathy is extended to his widow and two daughters in their great grief.

Mr. Gray was a native of Weymouth, where his father was engaged in a similar business. He came to the Island some 30 years ago and started in business at Sandown. A few years later he opened premises at Castlehold, Newport, and then established a branch at Southsea. The Newport business was later moved to 122 and 123 High-street, and on the sale of those premises to Boots Ltd., it was transferred to Nodehill, where extensive improvements are being carried out at the moment. He was recognised as an extremely able business man, and this fact and his many estimable personal qualities led to his return at the head of the poll when he sought election to the Town Council in 1922. He took a keen interest in his municipal duties and continued to serve on the Council until 1926 (being re-elected unopposed in 1925), when he resigned owing chiefly to his delicate health. From 1923 to 1926 he was a representative of the Council on the Education Committee, and his services in this connection were so valued that on retirement from the Council his membership was retained by co-option. It was only in November last that he resigned owing to the increasing calls of business making it impossible for him to attend the meetings. Mr. Gray was a keen supporter of the Rotary movement from its inception in the town, and was a past president of the club. He took a helpful interest in the Boy Scout movement, and heartily backed up his two talented daughters in their many activities in the musical and entertainment life of the town. He was one of the early members of the Wight Strollers and appeared in several of their earlier productions. His genial, kindly, yet eminently practical disposition won him the sincere regard of a wide circle of friends, who sincerely mourn his passing at so early an age.

The funeral service will be at the Parish Church, Newport, on Monday at 2 p.m.

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