

## Leonora Groves

Leonora not found in the 1871 Census

1861 England, Wales & Scotland Census

Gunville Place, Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight, Hampshire

Name	Relationship	Status	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Joseph Groves	Head	Married	28	Labourer Ag	Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight
Fanny Groves	Wife	Married	27	-	Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight
<b>Leonora Groves</b>	<b>Daughter</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>4</b>	-	<b>Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight</b>
Silas Groves	Son	Single	2	-	Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight
Fanny Groves	Daughter	Single	3/12	-	Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight

### Isle of Wight Observer

17 June 1876

#### NEWPORT

**MYSTERIOUS DEATH AT PARKHURST.**—An inquest was held by Mr. Blake, coroner, at Parkhurst, on Tuesday, on the body of Leonora Groves, aged 20, domestic servant to Mr. Martin, Master of the National (Board) School. It appeared that deceased left her master's house on Sunday afternoon, when she appeared to be quite well, and returned between 9.30 and 10 p.m. Almost directly afterwards she complained of feeling very sick and went to bed. On Monday morning she was too ill for work, and her mistress gave her a cup of tea. She said she had been very sick, and had diarrhea very badly in the night. When she came downstairs at 10 o'clock her mistress suggested that she should go home, and she sent her off in a cab, after taking a cup of tea and a glass of citrate magnesia. She went to her aunt's at Parkhurst, where she had been on the previous afternoon, and was so weak as to be lifted out of the cab. She complained of being in pain all over, and just before noon was convulsed and frothed at the mouth. Dr. Beckingsale was called in, and found her in a state of collapse and evidently dying. Her face was livid. She was conscious but apathetic and listless. She did not say where she suffered pain, but that she felt altogether unwell. She swallowed a glass of brandy without difficulty, but it had very little effect. Witness remained with her about a quarter of an hour, and when he left she was rather worse. He saw her again at 10 minutes to 1 o'clock, when she was quite dead. Witness had made a *post mortem* of the body. There was a good deal of discolouration, especially about the chest, face, and neck, and the dependent parts of the body. All the organs of the body were well nourished. The heart was engorged with blood, and the lungs also, but to a very much less extent. The interior of the stomach had an inflamed and irritated appearance, and the small intestines still more so. The other viscera were healthy. The brain was in a congested state, which was not uncommon in case of sudden death or death after a brief illness. The inflamed state of the stomach might have been caused by some acid substance. Witness thought that death was caused by some irritating substance having been taken. There was no disease. Citrate of magnesia would not have been injurious. Witness had removed the contents of the stomach and intestines. He did not consider that the removal of the deceased from Mr. Martin's hastened her death, but he considered that it would have been better if she had had medical advice earlier.—Mr. A. G. Martin gave some evidence as to deceased's removal from his house to her aunt's. It was her own wish to be taken there, and not to her father's near Westminster-lane Mill. The citrate of magnesia was obtained at the City of London Stores, and was commonly used in the family.—The inquiry was adjourned till Friday, to allow of analysis of deceased's stomach, and was then further adjourned.

**Isle of Wight Observer**  
**1 July 1876**

**NEWPORT**

**THE RECENT MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF A DOMESTIC SERVANT.**—The coroner's jury, of which Mr. M. Cook, of the Charles I. Inn was foreman, assembled on Monday at the Town-hall and resumed the enquiry touching the death of Leonora Groves, aged 20, domestic servant to Mr. Martin, master of the Board school here, who died after an illness of about 15 hours, on the 5<sup>th</sup> June. The coroner (Mr. Blake), read the following report of Dr. T. Stephenson, of Guy's Hospital, on analysis of the viscera of the deceased: "On the 13<sup>th</sup> instant I received from the hands of P.C. Yauldron a box containing two jars, and four pills, labelled, 'one or two of these pills to be taken occasionally', a packet of violet powder, a box labelled fragrant cold cream, and a bottle labelled granular effervescent citro tartaric of soda with magnesia and sugar, known as granular effervescent citrate of magnesia. I found the jars carefully secured and sealed with unbroken seals bearing the impression D.L.B. They were also both marked D.L.B., June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1876. One jar contained an adult human stomach slit open, and portion of the large intestine, and rather more than two fluid ozs, of slightly bloody fluid which had exuded from the viscera. The second jar contained a mass of human small intestines of an adult, and some exuded fluid. I have made analysis of the above mentioned viscera, and of the liquid contained in the jars, with the special view of detecting the presence of poison or deleterious substances. I find traces of copper in the contents of both jars, but in quantities that could not be weighed on account of their smallness. The preparations of copper are, when taken in sufficient quantities, poisonous. The quantity present in the viscera was altogether insufficient to cause death or illness. Copper in minute quantities is sometimes met with in the viscera of persons who have died from natural causes. It may be introduced in the system through cooking utensils in minute quantities, without the production of any very obvious effects on the health. I could detect no other poisons or deleterious substances in the contents of either jar. On the inner surface of the small intestine, at a spot where it had been slit up for the *post mortem* examination, there was a small piece of bark of some tree. The bark presented no appearance by which it could be recognized as belonging to any particular kind of plant. Its presence appeared to be accidental, and the appearance of the intestines in its vicinity did not differ from that of the other portions of the bowel. The appearances presented by the stomach and intestines were such as to lead me to form an opinion that the deceased person had suffered from powerful irritation of the alimentary canal, the stomach, and the small intestines, more especially, being red and congested, but there were not the appearances commonly observed after the use of mineral poisons." As to the pills and drugs forwarded to him, the doctor reported to the effect that there was nothing in them to throw any light on the subject.—The Coroner then read a letter, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> instant, from Dr. Stephenson to him, returning the depositions, saying he had read them carefully, and "I have endeavoured to arrive at a definite opinion as to the cause of death of the deceased, founded on the evidence already offered and the result of my analysis. The result is that I cannot be sure of the cause of death. The facts are extremely suspicious, and suggestive that the girl died from irritant poisoning; but in the absence of any proof that poison was administered, or was present in the body after death, it is impossible to say definitively that deceased died from the effects of poison. Moreover the symptoms point to no specific form of poison. The fact ascertained on *post mortem* examination afford the assumption that poison had been administered, and I must admit that the death was also consistent with the supposition that it was the result of natural causes. I do not think that the death resulted from the taking of an acid, as the viscera were by no means of unusual acidity, and the symptoms were more like those of other substances; the lesions were not those produced by concentrated acids. With violent vomit, and purging severely substances might be removed from the body before death, and in the absence of such ejecta and dejecta the noxious substances would remain undiscovered. It is possible too that all recognizable traces of certain poisons may disappear from the alimentary canal, and yet the absorbed poison might be discovered in the liver and kidneys."—The Coroner said it was obvious to him, on reading that letter, that the personal attendance of Dr. Stephenson there was unnecessary. The police had

not obtained further evidence, and it appeared to him that it would be useless to prolong the inquiry.—Dr. Beckingsale was present, and offered some explanation on a point in the evidence.—The jury retired for a short time, and ultimately gave a verdict to the effect that there was no evidence to show the cause of death.

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