

James Lawrence

1891 census, 42 Orchard Street, Carisbrooke

<i>James Lawrence</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>Cabinet Maker</i>	<i>Newport/Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight</i>
Mary J Lawrence	Wife	72		Michelmersh, Romsey, Hampshire

Isle of Wight Country Press – 10 September 1892

DEATH OF AN AGED MAT AT NEWPORT

A REVOLTING CASE..

An inquest which revealed a very revolting state of things was held before Edward F. Blake, Esq., Coroner for the Island, at the Plough Inn, Newport, on Thursday morning last, the inquiry being held into the circumstances surrounding the death of James Lawrence, aged 70, living at 42, Orchard-street, and formerly carrying on business as a cabinet maker, upholsterer, and paper-hanger. The home in which deceased and his wife lived was found to be in an indescribably filthy state, and the condition of its occupants was in keeping therewith. As will be seen from the evidence, deceased had been confined to his bed, or what did duty for a bed, for some two months, with no one but his wife, herself enfeebled with age, in attendance upon him. Such was the condition of the house that the place was shunned. But the most horrible feature of all was the condition of the old man himself. Mortification had seized one of his legs, owing, it is stated, to a neglected wound, and a few days before his death the foot came off, and was actually “stowed away” in a lower room. Rarely has a more horrible case engaged the attention of an Island jury. It was suggested that something should be added to the verdict by way of censure on account of the neglected condition of the deceased and of the utterly insanitary state of the house, but the jury, or some of them, were afraid of hurting the very sensitive feelings of those concerned, and so a simple verdict of “death from natural causes” was returned. It is generally believed that deceased had considerable means, as it is known that he was the owner of certain property about town, but it is stated on good authority that the property is heavily mortgaged, and that the benefits accruing there from were almost absorbed in satisfying the mortgagees. Those who had known the deceased in his younger days state that he was an excellent workman.

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