

Percy George Martin

Isle of Wight Observer –3 July 1886

NEWPORT

DROWNING OF A BOY AT SHIDE. – The county coroner (Mr. F. Blake), held an inquest at the Barley Mow publichouse, Shide, on Saturday morning, relative to the death of Percy George Martin, a little boy, aged five years, who was drowned at the Mill-dam, at Shide, on Thursday evening. The following evidence was taken: Eliza Martin, wife of Frederick Martin, of 3, Normandy Cottages, Shide, insurance agent, stated that she was the mother of the deceased, and last saw him alive on Thursday evening, as he was standing by the front gate about 7 o'clock. He said he was going on the down with his brothers. He was always going to the mill pond to play with the water and had been often corrected by his father for doing so. Deceased left the house alone, but she had no idea that he was going to the Mill-pond. A few minutes after he was gone she heard he was on the bridge. He was brought home dead in about three-quarters of an hour. She could not go near him, as she heard he was in the water. Her husband was not at home. – Henry Williams, of Cross-lanes, deposed that about a quarter to 8, on Thursday evening, he was delivering goods at Capt. Eveleigh's, when he heard a scream. Rushing across the garden down to the stream he asked several children what was the matter, but could get no answer. He returned by the hatchways, and Miss Eveleigh told him it was reported a child had been drowned. Looking down at the front part of the hatchway witness saw what appeared to be the head of the child. Mr. McSherry who came by just afterwards, got into the water, and with his assistance he (witness) got the child out. He was dead, but not quite cold. He had no hat on, but was otherwise fully dressed. Witness helped to strip the body, attempts to restore animation, in which witness assisted, were made, but without success. The Misses Eveleigh and Mr. Edward Eveleigh did all they could for the child. Dr Castle came before the deceased was removed from the place, and pronounced life extinct. Witness thought the water was between 4ft. and 5ft. deep. There was a steep bank. Water was running from the hatchways. – Dr Castle deposed that on reaching the spot where deceased was about 8.15 on Thursday evening, he found that death had taken place. A lady was trying to restore respiration by artificial means. He believed everything possible was done to restore animation. He practised artificial respiration himself for a short time, but was unsuccessful. The appearance of the child led him to believe death was caused by drowning. Examined the body afterwards, but found no marks of violence. Could not say how long the body had been in the water. – The Coroner having summed up the evidence, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned."

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