

William Marsh

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NEWPORT STREET ACCIDENT ENDS FATALLY

On Saturday the Deputy Coroner (R. E. A. Webster, Esq.) held an inquest at St. Mary's Hospital on the death of Mr. William Marsh, aged 80, a retired jobbing gardener and old-age pensioner, of Eastfield, Alvington-road, Carisbrooke, who died in the hospital on the previous Wednesday after being injured in a street accident at Newport on October 4th. Mr. H. R. Palmer represented the deceased's family, Mr. W. H. Cool, the driver of the car involved in the accident, and Police-Sergt. J. Barber acted as Coroner's officer.

The deceased's daughter, Mrs. Elsie E. W. Whatley, with whom he lived, stated that her father had good health, sight, and hearing. He was quite well when he left home to walk to Newport on October 4th. Later in the day she was informed that he had been knocked down by a car and had been taken to the County Hospital with a broken leg. She had frequently visited him in hospital. At first he seemed to make progress, but latterly he had gradually failed.

Denis James Witham, aged 17, motor mechanic employed by Messrs. Williams, of York-street, Cowes, and residing at 8 Milton-road, Cowes, stated that at about 9.45 a.m. on October 4th he was driving a saloon car out of St. Thomas's-square, Newport, intending to turn down High-street. As there was a stream of traffic coming up the street he stopped with his bonnet about in line with the High-street pavement. A Singer car began to turn into the Square, and as he did not think it would have quite enough room to pass he reversed his car for a few feet. Before doing so he looked into his mirror reflector, and as he backed the car he was looking out of the rear window. He saw no one in the way and felt no bump, but a man tapped his side window and said a man was lying in the road behind. His car was about 2ft.6in. from the near-side kerb, and when he got out he found the man lying in the space parallel with the car. He did not seem badly injured, and was assisted into a shop. - By the Coroner: He was sure he was looking through the rear window as he backed and that he saw no one in the way.

The Coroner then read a statement which Marsh had made to the police while in the County Hospital: "I saw a small saloon car with two men in it come along St. Thomas's-square and stop in about the middle of the road, with its front in High-street half turned towards the Town-hall. I walked across the road towards Morris's shop, and when I was nearly past the car it was driven sharply back without warning, knocking me over. There were two men in it, and they appeared more interested in each other than in what was on the road."

Witham said that statement was not correct. He did not turn towards the Town-hall, and he and his companion were not talking or fooling about in any way. - By P.S. Barber: He agreed that in a statement to the police he expressed doubt as whether the car actually struck Mr. Marsh, and suggested that he must have slipped off the pavement.

Leslie D. J. Grant, apprentice fitter, of 26 Thetis-road, Cowes, a passenger in the car, corroborated. - By Mr. Palmer: Witham was looking out of the rear window all the time he was reversing the car; it was not reversed with a jerk.

Stanley White, manager of Morris's Stores, described how he saw the car standing stationary and a man's legs on the ground on the other side of it. He ran across and told the driver, and assisted the injured man into his shop, where he was attended to. He saw no fooling going on in the car.

First War Reserve Constable A. Buckell deposed that when he arrived the car was standing 2ft.6in. from the kerb. The road was 20ft.6in. wide at the corner. He rendered first aid to the injured man, who was seen by a doctor and taken to the County Hospital.

Dr. C. K. Sylvester, medical officer at St Mary's Hospital, stated that the deceased man was transferred from the County Hospital on October 21st, suffering from a fractured thigh bone and extensive bed-sore on his back. In spite of every attention the sores became septic, and death was due to septic absorption. - By the Coroner: Death was only due to the accident in the sense that but for the fractured leg the deceased would not have had the sores.

The jury, of which Mr. C Bulbeck was foreman, returned a verdict of accidental death adding the opinion that the accident was due to the deceased stepping off the pavement while the car was being reversed.

Mr Marsh had resided with his daughter, Mrs. Whatley, for many years, and was a well known figure in the district, his kindly and cheerful disposition winning him the esteem of many friends. The funeral took place on Saturday, the interment being at Carisbrooke Cemetery. The mourners were Mr. W.H. Marsh (son), Miss Dora Marsh (daughter), and Mr. and Mrs. O. Whatley (daughter and son-in-law). There were many beautiful floral tributes.

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