

Sarah Piper

1881 census, 15 Field Place, Carisbrooke

<i>Sarah Rowlins</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>Licensed Hawker</i>	<i>Wookey, Somerset</i>
Annie Rowlins	Daughter		19	Gen Serv	Wookey, Somerset
Kate Rowlins	Daughter		17	Gen Serv	Winchester, Hampshire
Tommy Rowlins	Son		11	Scholar	Newport, Hampshire
Harry Rowlins	Son		7	Scholar	Newport, Hampshire
William Piper	Boarder		53	Cooper	Brading, Hampshire

1885, William Piper married Sarah Rollands (Parsons) at Register Office, Newport, IW (iwfhs)

1891 census, 15 Field Place, Carisbrooke

William Piper	Head	59	Hawker	Brading, Isle of Wight
<i>Sarah Piper</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>51</i>		<i>Somerset</i>
Annie Piper	Daughter	30		Newport, Isle of Wight
Tom Piper	Son	20	Photographer	Newport, Isle of Wight
Henry Piper	Son	16	Clothier (Apprentice)	Newport, Isle of Wight

January 1895, William Piper dies and is buried at Carisbrooke Cemetery (Section H, plot 441)

Isle of Wight Country Press – 4 January 1896

DISTRESSING SUICIDE AT NEWPORT.

On Saturday afternoon Edward F. Blake, Esq., held an inquest at the Bedford Arms, Newport, on the body of Mrs. Sarah Piper, widow, of Field-place, who committed suicide by drowning herself early that morning. Deceased was pretty well known from the fact that she had for many years past sold photographic views at Carisbrooke Castle gate. Mr. G. Perkins was foreman of the jury and the following evidence was given:

James Rogers, labourer, said that just past 9 o'clock that morning he was working in Westminster-road, when he received an intimation from a man named Cook that a woman was drowning in Westminster pond. Deceased was floating on her back, and witness ran in after her and dragged her out on to the bank. She was quite dead. Witness sent for a doctor. Deceased was an utter stranger to him. The water was 3ft. or 4ft. deep at the place where he saw deceased.

P. S. Cass said that deceased evidently got into the stream at the bottom of Field-piece, as he found her slippers there. She had floated down about 100 yards when discovered.

Annie Pepperal said she lived at Upper Field-piece, and deceased, who was 54 years of age, was her mother, and she lived with her. Witness last saw her alive at a quarter to 7 that morning. She got up and went from the bed-room as usual. When deceased went downstairs she said to witness "I'll go downstairs. Don't you hurry." About 9 o'clock Mrs. Snow, a neighbour, came and called and asked witness if she knew where her mother was. Witness said "Downstairs." Mrs. Snow replied "No, she is drowned." Witness went with Mrs. Snow to Westminster pond, where they found her mother lying dead on the bank. Deceased had been very strange in her mind for the past month. Witness knew it by the appearance of her face and eyes. She had a strange way of looking and speaking in going about the house. She talked to herself a great deal. She went out as usual. She had been at the Castle for a great many years selling photographic views. She had told witness that she would commit suicide During the last month she had said she would certainly put an end to herself, but she never said when or how or gave any reason for threatening to do such a thing, though witness had asked her to tell her if anything caused her to say such a thing. Deceased was with her the whole of the previous day and was very quiet till towards the evening, when she became very restless and wandering. She went out of the house into the garden, and witness fetched her back from the garden four times. Every time she asked deceased what she went out for and what she was looking for, and she looked round at her and said "I want nothing." Deceased slept in the same room with witness and she did not wander during the night, but was very still and quiet till about a quarter to 7 that morning, when she got up. Deceased had had a heavier

attack of the same sort before. Witness knew of nothing to cause deceased to take her life.

Dr. Coombs said that he had known deceased by sight for years, but did not think he had ever attended her. He was sent for about 10 minutes past 9 that morning, and on going to the meadow near Westminster pond he found deceased lying on the pond bank quite dead. He should say she had been dead a good hour. There were no marks of violence. From her general appearance he should say she died from drowning.

The Coroner said they could have no doubt that the poor woman took her life. The only question for them to consider was as to the state of her mind at the time she committed the act.

A juror (Mr. Adams) asked if the police-sergeant thought deceased might have slipped into the water accidentally when going there, as she had been in the habit of doing, to get water.

P.S. Cass said that the slippers were placed together close to the step, as if deceased had taken them off and placed them there before going into the water, which was 3ft. or 4ft. deep at the place. He did not think she could have accidentally slipped in, having regard to appearances.

The Foreman said her slippers would have gone in with her if she had slipped in.

The Coroner said that he had no doubt from the evidence of the daughter, which was given clearly, that the deceased had been in a delicate state, as far as her mind was concerned, for a considerable time past, and there could be no doubt that her mind was overbalanced at the time she committed that rash act.

The jury agreed, and immediately returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane.

The first witness - James Rogers - was commended and thanked by the foreman and jury for his promptitude in going into the water with his clothes on after the body. One juror said Rogers was only a working man, and asked whether a gratuity could not be allowed for his services.

The Coroner: He gets a fee for it.

Research and transcriptions by Bob Jacobs for the Friends of Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries, © 2018
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