

William Charles Smith

Isle of Wight County Press

15 August 1945

Death of Mr. W. C. Smith.

NEWPORT BUSINESS MAN AND SINGER.

Many friends deeply regret the passing at the Royal Worcester Infirmary on Monday of Mr. William Charles Smith aged 74, formerly of Pan Foundry and latterly of Greystones, Medina-avenue, Newport. Mr. Smith received his early training in engineering at Pan Foundry under Mr. George Perkins, the former proprietor, on whose retirement in 1909 he entered into partnership with Mr. H. Whitehead, present Mayor of Newport. They then commenced business as general and agricultural engineers under the now well-known style of Smith and Whitehead. Mr. Smith's business brought many contracts, particularly with local authorities and the agricultural community, and he was well known and greatly respected throughout the Island. He was a familiar figure at shows of the Royal I.W. Agricultural Society, where for many years his firm was responsible for the erection of temporary buildings and the arrangement of the ring, which he personally supervised on show days. He was also associated with his partner in local building development, notably at Parkhurst, where their work is commemorated by the name "Whitesmith-road." He retired from business early in the war.

From 1935 until his retirement for reasons of health and absence from the Island, Mr. Smith served as a member of the Town Council, representing Pan Ward, and in this capacity he did much useful work. He was also well known in Island musical circles, particularly as a chorister. He had a fine bass voice and was an esteemed member of the Newport Gleemen and the Newport Philharmonic Society, of which he was one of the oldest supporters. He also frequently appeared at entertainments as a member of a vocal quartet, in addition to competing regularly in several classes at the Island musical festivals at Ryde. A devoted Free Churchman he held many offices in the former Primitive Methodist Church in Upper Pyle-street, Newport. He was a leading member of the choir, and was the Sunday-school superintendent for a number of years. With other members of the congregation he transferred to the Quay-street Church when Methodist Union took place, and there became a prominent member of the choir. He was also trustee of the Quay-street and other Methodist churches.

While resident at Medina-avenue, he became the first head-warden for the Pan 2 District in the A.R.P. organisation, and did much valuable work during the immediate pre-war period and in the early months of hostilities. Unfortunately his health broke down, and in 1942 he and Mrs. Smith left the Island to reside in Anglesey, where their daughter, Mrs. G. F. Bloomfield, and their son, Mr. W. E. H. Smith were then living. It was his intention to return to the Wight to which he was devoted, and he recently removed from Anglesey and was staying with his son at Malvern, but his health rapidly declined, and he passed away in spite of hospital care.

A man of genial and kind disposition, and one who enthusiastically and conscientiously fulfilled any task which he undertook without regard to personal considerations, his passing is a loss to the community, and the deepest sympathy will be extended to his widow and the family in their bereavement.

The funeral took place yesterday (Friday) afternoon at the Quay-street Methodist Church, Newport.

Transcription by Kate MacDonell for the Friends of Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries,

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Smith and Whitehead garage (Brian Greening)