

Lilian Joan de Horne Waldron

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DEATH FROM NATURAL CAUSES

INQUEST NEED NOT HAVE BEEN HELD

The Coroner (Mr. J. V. Bullin) told the husband of a Newport mother who died in hospital on May 28th, at the age of 36, that had it been possible to obtain a report quickly from the public analyst's department at Portsmouth, an inquest need not have been held. The inquest, at Whitecroft Hospital on Tuesday, was on Mrs. Lilian Joan de Horne Waldron, of Staplers Close, Newport, wife of Mr. J. G. Waldron, a bank official.

Mrs. Waldron had been suffering from sinus trouble for about five years and increasing doses of sedatives, including pethidine, had been given in order to ease her pain. She was taken to Whitecroft Hospital for observation and treatment, and, after a dose of sodium amytal, was found staggering in the corridor. She told a nurse that she did not intend to stay in the hospital. Because of her depressed state she was given paraldehyde, and went off to sleep almost immediately. The doctor on his rounds did not see her for fear of waking her up, and at 5 a.m. the ward sister thought she was still asleep. When the nurse tried to waken her she was found to be dead.

The Coroner said that the circumstances were properly reported to him by Dr. Wood and Dr. Gordon Brown, and because of the history of drugs it had to be determined whether they had affected her death. An inquest was opened, but, had a report been available quickly, revealing that death was due to natural causes, and that the drugs had nothing to do with Mrs. Waldron's death, an inquest need not have been held. As an inquest had been opened, however, it was only fair to all concerned to hear the pathologist's and analyst's reports.

Dr. P. D. H. Swinstead (pathologist) said that his examination was made on May 31st, but he had to await the findings of the analyst. This showed that Mrs. Waldron was not poisoned by drugs. Barbiturates existed in normal dosages. The cause of death was myocardial failure, associated with peripheral neuritis, agitated depression and general emaciation.

The Coroner recorded a verdict of death due to natural causes in accordance with the medical evidence.