

John William Way

Isle of Wight County Press - 26 September 1931

NEWPORT.

DEATH OF MR. JOHN W. WAY. – We regret to record the death, during an operation at the County Hospital, on Thursday, of Mr. John William Way, who for a quarter of a century was the esteemed and capable superintendent of the Corporation Waterworks at Carisbrooke. Deceased, who was in his 83rd year, was born at Yafford Mill and served his apprenticeship at the engineering works of Mr. Jacob Scott, at Newport. After being employed by an engineering firm at Ringwood and at Portsmouth Dockyard, he returned to the Island in 1887 and was for some years a partner with the late Mr. Walter Minns in an engineering business in Newport. In 1896 he was appointed superintendent engineer of the Newport Waterworks, and during his tenure of that responsible position important developments took place in regard to the Corporation water supply. He was also superintendent of the Borough Sewage Disposal Works at the Quay. He remained in charge of the Waterworks until 1921, since when he continued in the employ of the Corporation until about two years ago, and throughout did good and conscientious service. He was formerly an ardent cyclist in the days of the old I.W. Cycling Club, and for many years was a keen and skilful bowler, chiefly in the days of the old Carisbrooke Bowling Club, of which he was a valued and popular member. Latterly deceased had resided with his daughter, Mrs. Long, at Clio, Bellevue-road, Cowes. Much sympathy is felt with the widow and five daughters in their bereavement.

**Isle of Wight County Press
3 October 1931**

DEATH UNDER AN ANAESTHETIC

**INQUEST ON
FORMER SUPERINTENDENT
OF NEWPORT WATERWORKS**

An inquiry into the circumstances of the death of John William Way, 82, formerly for many years superintendent of the Newport Waterworks at Carisbrooke, who died at the County Hospital on Thursday while undergoing an operation, was held on Saturday. The investigation was held by the Acting Deputy Coroner (W. H. P. F. Thinkell, Esq.), in the Primitive Methodist School, Ryde. Mr. R. J. Welch for foreman of the jury, and Ald. A. Andrews, J.P. (chairman of the County Hospital Committee), was present, together with Inspector A. Morrison.

Charles Hibbard, commission agent, of 26 The Mall, Newport, deposed that deceased was his father-in-law. For the past year he had been living with a married daughter at Clio, Bellevue-road, Cowes. Apart from the trouble from which he suffered, deceased had made no complaint about his heart, and was desirous of undergoing an operation.

Dr. W. H. Gervis, of East Cowes, a member of the honorary medical staff of the County Hospital, told the Coroner and jury that he first attended the deceased at Cowes on June 30th, and found that he was suffering from an enlarged prostate, for which he advised an operation. The case was not a very bad one,

but it had grown worse when he saw deceased on September 7th. Deceased entered the hospital, and on September 11th underwent a minor operation under gas, which he stood quite well. There was then no sign of any trouble with the heart. Twelve days later he was examined to see if he was fit to undergo the major operation, and on Thursday, it was decided that he was fit, a thorough examination having been made with a stethoscope. The operation was started, and was nearly finished when the deceased collapsed. Having regard to the kind of operation, it was easier than most, and was proceeding satisfactorily when deceased collapsed.

In reply to the foreman, Dr. Gervis said the minor operation under gas lasted about 10 minutes. The reason why gas was used on that occasion was because it involved a minimum amount of danger in the shortest time. Answering the Coroner, witness said that, in the view of the age of the patient, the operation was performed as quickly as possible.

Dr. A. C. Liesching, of Regina House, Ryde, and hon. anaesthetist at the County Hospital, said he had nothing to do with the case until the day of the operation, when he examined the heart and lungs, which were normal for a man of deceased's age. The anaesthetic was commenced at 4.10, and the patient died just before 4.30. Witness used chloroform, but less than half a minute before deceased's death he added a small quantity of ether when there were signs of failure of respiration. Every possible means were taken to restore the deceased, but without result. Witness had taken part in two previous operations that day which were completely successful, using the anaesthetic from the same bottle in all the cases.

In reply to the foreman, the witness said that if they used a large quantity of ether there was a risk, in the case of an elderly patient, of pneumonia or bronchitis developing. He was perfectly satisfied with the quality of the anaesthetic. He knew that during the last seven or eight years it had been used in 12,000 cases without any trouble. Death was due to cardiac failure, initiated by the administration of the anaesthetic.

The Foreman: One of those cases which unexpectedly collapse?—Yes

The Coroner said it was clear to him from the evidence that deceased died from misadventure. As representing the public, they were jealous of the status and reputation of the County Hospital, but they could not disguise the fact that that was the second case they had had in a week under exactly similar circumstances. He therefore felt that the fullest inquiry should be made, and, not being inclined to deal with the matter himself, he asked that a jury should be summoned. He hoped that as the result of that investigation they would preserve the hospital from idle talk.

The Foreman intervened to say that the anaesthetic administered in the other case was not the same mixture as in that case, so they could hardly say that it was anything to do with the anaesthetic.

Without retiring the jury returned a verdict of "Death by misadventure".

Ald. Andrews, as representing the hospital authorities, expressed deep sympathy with the relatives. He added that it was not for him to make any comment other than to say that he was having the medical staff to meet him at once, in order to have the whole matter thoroughly investigated, and to see if any additional light could be thrown upon it.

Mr. Hibbard expressed his thanks to Ald. Andrews and to the staff at the hospital for all that had been done.

The funeral took place at Carisbrooke Cemetery on Monday. The service was conducted by the vicar (the Rev. H. S. Footman). The family mourners were Mrs. E. Way (widow), Mrs. J. C. Hibbard, Mrs. G. M. Armstrong, and Mrs. O. M. Long (daughters), and Mr. J. C. Hibbard and Mr. B. Long (sons-in-law). Those also present were the Mayor of Newport (Mrs. E. R. Chandler), the Deputy-Mayor (Mr. W. Blake,

T.C.) and Mrs. Blake, Captain P. K. Shields, and Messrs. S. Russell, T.C. (chairman of the Waterworks Committee), J. H. Deacon, T.C., C. Wells (Carisbrooke Waterworks), and G. F. Kellaway (water inspector). The beautiful floral tributes include one from the Mayor, aldermen, and councilors of the borough of Newport and one from his colleagues and officials of the corporation.

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