

Ernest West

Portsmouth Evening News - 1 February 1906

ISLE OF WIGHT.

NEWPORT.

INFANT FATALLY BURNED.

On Wednesday afternoon the Isle of Wight Coroner (Mr. F. A Joyce) held an inquest at the I.W. Workhouse on the body of Ernest West, aged one year and ten months, the child of Wm. C. West, labourer, of 6, Gunville-lane, near Carisbrooke, who was the victim of a fatal burning accident on the previous Monday afternoon. – The evidence showed that the mother of the deceased left the child alone by the fire, in which the poker was sticking, whilst she went to a neighbour for a piece of cotton. About two minutes later a neighbour called Mrs. West, who then saw deceased running up the road with his clothes on fire, it being surmised that he had pulled the poker out of the fire and set alight to the front of his cotton overall, which he was wearing over a flannelette frock. - Mrs. Cooper tried to smother the flames by wrapping her skirt round the little one, who was badly burnt about the chest, face, back of the head and left arm. Under the advice of Dr. Underhill he was removed to the Workhouse Infirmary, where he died from shock early next morning. – The mother of deceased tearfully admitted that there was no fireguard, but added that she would get one now. – The Coroner said it was regrettable that parents left young children unattended by an unprotected fire, but he did not think they could blame the mother under the circumstances, though the result was deplorable. – The jury returned a verdict of “Death from shock, due to accidental burning,” and expressed the hope that in future the mother would not leave children in such circumstances without having a fireguard on. – The Coroner agreed.

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