

## **Isle of Wight County Press --- 12 September 1964**

### **OLD ESTABLISHED BUSINESS CLOSING**

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#### **MESSRS. BURTON, OF NEWPORT**

One of Newport's oldest established businesses---Messrs. Burton, the well-known firm of drapers and milliners, of 132 High Street---is to close at the end of October. The premises have been purchased by the trustees of a family settlement. There is no indication yet as to what they are to be used for.

Born in London, the late Mr. Frank Burton---who died in October, 1962---took over a drapery and millinery business started by his father in Nodehill. In 1900 he transferred to 22 Holyrood Street where he had acquired premises known as "The Three Tuns" from Mr. J. H. Wavell. In 1907 the building was extended to adjoining property in the High Street previously owned by Mr. J. H. Cory. A further extension was made in 1925 when Mr. Burton acquired 131 High Street from Mr. R. Pinnock.

For some years the business has been run by Madame Therese Burton who is to retire when the shop closes. In an interview with a "County Press" reporter, Madame Burton said she very much regretted severing the happy association with her clientele, many of whom had been customers for a very long time. Since her husband's death, however, she had lost much of her incentive. The soul of the business died with him, and without it the place was like a large empty box. She had no specific plans for her retirement apart from tending her beautiful garden at the rear of her elegant residence---The Green Door, at 120 High Street. Later, perhaps, she would give private French tuition. She would not be returning to live in her native France. She loved England and was deeply rooted here.

Born in Rouen, Normandy, Madame Burton came to live at The Green Door with her husband in 1924. In August this year she returned to France for the first time in 14 years, visiting her brothers and cousins who live in Rouen and Paris.

Before the outbreak of the second world war, Madame Burton helped her husband in the business for about eight or nine years. She took no active part in the firm from 1941 to 1954 when she again joined her husband. During the war the basement of their house in the High Street was requisitioned as a public air raid shelter. Many people took refuge there during day and night raids. They were invariably welcomed by Madame Burton personally who often provided flasks of hot beverages and biscuits.

The late Mr. Burton maintained a great interest in a wide variety of societies and organisations. He was closely associated with the British Red Cross Society to which he and Madame Burton were generous benefactors. During the second world war Mr. Burton put

premises in Lower St. James's Street at the disposal of the branch as headquarters rent free. At the time of his death he was assistant director (men) of the Island branch. He served with the French Red Cross in France in the first world war. He was the oldest member of the Island Chamber of Commerce, of which he was president three times, a founder member of the Newport Rotary Club, a Freemason, and member of many other leading Island societies and organisations. He shared his wife's great love of floriculture, literature and music, and in earlier years his skill as a violinist was placed at the disposal of local orchestras.

Mr. Burton was among the first "County Press" advertisers to realise the selling value of what has been termed "the chatty small" taking some philosophical or topical theme and using it as an eye-catching introduction to an offer of bargains. Occasionally he would use the French language, which he loved.

One of the most elegant women of her time, Madame Burton, naturally, has strong views on fashion and fashion trends. Being a Frenchwoman, she might be expected to laud the Paris fashion houses, but contends that anything Paris can produce, London can produce equally well. In fact she noted on her recent visit to Paris that many English made articles were on sale there. She does not approve of current teenage fashions.

In a tribute to her staff, past and present, Madame Burton praised the work of Miss L. Reynolds, who, as secretary / book-keeper, had given devoted service over a very long time.

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