

## **Charles Beauchamp Killeen**

**Isle of Wight County Press - 13 August 1960**

### **NEWPORT**

#### **DEATH OF CAPTAIN C. B. KILLEEN**

#### **MILITARY AND CIVILIAN RIDING MASTER**

Captain Charles Beauchamp Killeen, of Karind, Fairlee Road, whose funeral took place at St. Paul's Church, Barton, on Monday, will be sadly missed in Island riding and show circles. His death occurred suddenly, at the age of 74, the previous Wednesday at the Royal I.W. County Hospital, Ryde. He had been suffering from heart trouble, but was still quite active; he was in hospital only two weeks, and seemed to be making good progress. He was a wonderful horseman, a skilful instructor, and a popular personality, and in the course of a colourful career was a military riding master, conducted civilian riding schools, and led a team of dashing rodeo riders.

Captain Killeen was a Newportonian, son of Mr. James Edward Killeen, who kept the Castle and Banner Inn, Hunnyhill. He joined the Royal Horse Artillery in 1902 as a boy bugler, and rose to the rank of captain. He served in South Africa and India, and from there his regiment were rushed to France at the outbreak of the first world war. For the greater part of the war he saw active service abroad, and for about the last year was stationed at Canterbury, Sheffield, and then as riding master at Hilsea Barracks, Portsmouth. In 1917 he married Miss Agnes Rosa Osborne, a daughter of Mr. Frank Osborne, a prison officer at Parkhurst; the wedding took place at St. Thomas's Church, Newport, where Captain Killeen was formerly a choirboy. Mrs. Killeen accompanied her husband at the home stations, and after the war she went with the regiment to Iraq. They went on occasions to a hill station at Karind, Persia, a place which inspired the choice of name for their Newport house. They returned from Iraq about 1921, and on leaving the Army Captain Killeen set up a riding school in Shanklin.

#### **WIDELY-TRAVELLED RODEO RIDERS**

Between the wars he formed the Wight Rodeo Riders, at the outset training a troupe of local amateurs. Such was their skill and attraction that they were in demand at agricultural shows and other events in many parts of the British Isles. They gave thrilling displays of Argentine gaucho riding, trick riding, Roman massed riding, and Cossack and Indian cavalry sport exhibitions (including tent pegging and mounted swordsmanship), completing the programme with rope spinning and lassoing. The Rodeos were in Jersey when the second war broke out, and Captain Killeen was faced with the difficult task of arranging an immediate return, including shipment of the horses. Captain Killeen closed his Shanklin school about 1935, and opened another in Fairlee Road, Newport, the family moving to Karind, adjoining the school, in 1938. The outbreak of the war saw the virtual closure of the school and the disbandment of the Rodeos. Captain Killeen was founder - commander of the Newport Home Guard, whom he trained to a high degree of smartness. At a presentation ceremony in August, 1940, he received a gift in recognition of his services, when he handed over the command to Lt.-Col. H. C. A. Bilshen, M.B.E. Captain Killeen having been called for service as a member of the Army Reserve of Officers. His duties included inspection of guns at Royal Artillery stations.

## **AGRICULTURAL SHOW TRIBUTE**

After the war he resumed riding instruction on a civilian basis, acting as administrator at a Brambles Holiday Camp riding school and conducting a school at Gurnard Pines Holiday Camp. He taught children all the year and holiday visitors in the summer. He was actively engaged in this pursuit until he went into hospital. He showed a practical interest in the Royal I.W. Agricultural Society shows. Miss G. E. M. Windebank (assistant hon. secretary of the society) told the "County Press": "Captain Killeen has been associated with the show for many years, acting as assembly officer - an important job in the light horse classes. He was a familiar figure - everyone knew him - and was excellent at the job. Although the duties were efficiently carried out this year by Mr. T. E. Reynolds, we all missed Captain Killeen very much. It was hoped that he would be able to attend the next show, and I wrote to him to this effect."

Captain Killeen leaves a widow and a daughter (Miss Barbara Killeen). His son, Beauchamp, was killed in an accident in 1941 while on Home Guard duties.

## **THE FUNERAL**

The funeral service was conducted by the Vicar (the Rev. L. J. D. Wheatley). The family mourners were Mrs. Killeen (widow), Miss B. Killeen (daughter), Messrs. K. and R. Killeen (nephews), and Mrs. L. Goater, Mrs. F. Stevenson, and Mrs. and Mrs. J. Kirby (cousins). Also present were Mrs. A. G. Starke (director, Brambles Holiday Camp), and representatives of the Royal I.W. Agricultural Society, Messrs. Hurst and Son, and Newport Post Office (where Mrs. Killeen has been employed in a part time capacity since 1942). Among the floral tributes were those from the head postmaster of Newport and staff, the staff of the Brambles and pupils of Gurnard Pines riding school. The interment was at Newport Cemetery, in the grave of Captain Killeen's son. Messrs. O. C. Hamilton and Son made the arrangements.

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