

Charles Mayhew Coombes

Isle of Wight County Press - 22 April 1933

MOTOR-CYCLE FATALITY AT WOOTTON.

Young Newport Man's Tragic End.

An Easter Monday morning spin on a motor-cycle resulted in the tragic death of Mr. Charles Coombes, 25, third son of Mr. W. T. Coombes, harness maker, of Upper St. James's-street, Newport. While riding down Wootton-hill at about 11.20 on Monday morning, owing to some reason which may be explained at the inquest to be held this (Saturday) morning, Mr. Coombes lost control of his machine, evidently when travelling rather fast. His cycle skidded, struck the wall on the left-hand side of the road, and then rebounded into the opposite gutter, throwing the rider onto his head. He received severe injuries. Mrs. Smith, of the Wootton Telephone Exchange, rendered first-aid, with the help of Mr. George Williams, and his sons, and Mr. J. Harbour. Some delay occurred in finding medical aid, but after about half an hour Dr. Kennedy arrived and immediately ordered the injured man's removal to the County Hospital. He was conveyed there in the hospital ambulance. His condition was extremely grave, and he passed away early on Wednesday morning without remaining consciousness. He was a very popular young fellow, employed as a carpenter by Mr. Sinden, of Wootton, and his tragically sudden end is much deplored by a wide circle of friends who deeply sympathise with his parents and the other members of the family.

Isle of Wight County Press - 29 April 1933

THE WOOTTON MOTOR-CYCLE FATALITY.

Punctured Tyre The Probable Cause.

No definite theory as to the cause of the accident was forthcoming at the inquest on Saturday of Charles Mayhew Coombes, aged 25, a carpenter, of Upper St. James's-street, Newport, who died at the County Hospital on Wednesday week from injuries resulting from being thrown from his motor-cycle at Wootton on Easter Monday.

The inquiry was conducted at the High-street Methodist School by the Acting Deputy Coroner (W. H. P. F. Thirkell, Esq.), who had the assistance of a jury, of whom Mr. E. P. Topp was the foreman. Inspector H. Rogers represented the police.

William Thomas Coombes, master saddler, of 87 Nodehill, Newport, said his son was an experienced motor-cycle rider and rode to his work at Wootton each day. Asked if his son had suffered from fainting fits witness said he had never known him do so. He saw him at 10.30 on Easter Monday morning, when he seemed "as right as a trivet", but he knew he had suffered from toothache.—Inspector Rogers said deceased's brother told an officer in the Ryde police that deceased had suffered from fainting fits. — P.C. Luckett said that after the accident his brother called at the Police-station and said deceased had been ill that morning and he thought he ought not to have gone out.—The father repeated that so far as he was aware his son had never had a fainting fit in his life.

Edith Henrietta Warne, wife of Ernest Frank Warne, aircraft mechanic, of Glenfield, High-street, Wootton, stated that on Easter Monday when in her bed-room at about 11.15 a.m. she heard a motor-cycle coming down the hill towards the bridge. The sound of a thud and a grating noise attracted her attention and on looking out of

the window she saw a motor-cyclist bounding down the hill as if he had lost control. He continued a straight course until he struck the wall of the house Derrydown. The machine rebounded into the roadway and turned over and deceased was thrown a distance of about 44ft. and was lying in the road unconscious. People came from various houses to attend to him.—By the foreman: The thud she heard might have been caused by a tyre puncturing, but it did not sound like a bursting noise.

P.C. Turnbull, who had been sent for, stated that on the day of the accident a brother called at the Ryde Police-station and in the course of inquiring where the cycle was said the deceased should never have been cycling; he was warned before he left home. Witness asked what was the matter with him and he replied “I expect he had one of those fainting fits”. The brother added that two or three nights previously when he was sleeping with deceased he had to get out of bed because of his brother’s condition.—The father said that was due to his son having toothache, but he had never known him have fainting fits.

Miss Marguerite Griffin-Making, of 8 Seinde-crescent, Finchley, said she was driving a motor-car from Wootton-bridge and saw deceased thrown into the road.

P.C. Luckett stated that at the entrance to the garden of the bungalow Derrydown there was a 4ft. bank supported by a stone base. Fifteen inches from the ground there were marks of the stone having been chipped off. Forty-four feet on the Ryde side of the bungalow was a pool of blood where deceased had fallen. The cycle had apparently skidded for 29ft. from the first impact with the wall judging by the marks on the road.

Dr. George Quentin Chance, house surgeon at the County Hospital, said deceased was admitted at 12.30 on Monday. He was unconscious and apparently suffering from a fractured skull. He died on Wednesday morning without having recovered consciousness. Death was due to a fractured skull.

The Coroner, in opening the inquiry, said it was unlike many cases they had because there was generally someone who was able to say what happened. In that case they had nobody who saw what happened. The machine was so smashed up that it was quite impossible to say whether the steering gear or brake was at fault, and what happened would probably be conjecture.

The jury returned a verdict of accidental death and added that it was probably due to a punctured tyre which caused deceased to lose control of his machine.

THE FUNERAL

took place on Sunday, the service being held at St. John’s Church, Newport, and the interment was at Newport Cemetery. The Rev. W. H. Mackinnon (vicar of St. John’s) officiated. The mourners were Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Coombes (parents), Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Coombes (brother and sister-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. F. Smith and Mr. and Mrs. S. Croutear (brothers-in-law and sisters), Miss F. Coombes (sister), Messrs. W. M. and J. Coombes (brothers), Miss I. Douse, Miss. D. M. Burden, Mrs. Edmunds, Messrs. L. Edmunds, G. Hunt, and Elliott, G. Sinden (employer), A. Cheverton, and F. Kelleway, Mr. and Mrs. C. Russell, Mr. A. F. Rice, Mr. Clayton Rice, Miss K. Rice, and Mr. F. Bullock, representing workers at Great Park.

Mr. W. T. Coombes and family and the fiancée of the late C. Coombes wish to express their sincere thanks to those who rendered assistance at the time of the accident, to the doctors and staff of the County Hospital, and to all those who sent expressions of sympathy in their bereavement and floral tributes.

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