

## William King Ediss

Isle of Wight County Press – 15 March 1930

### DEATH OF MR. W. K. EDISS, OF NEWPORT.

#### SIXTY-FOUR YEARS A CHORISTER.

We regret to record the death on Tuesday morning at his residence, 5 Castle-road, Newport, of Mr. William K. Ediss, for 44 years head-master of the Church of England schools, and for 64 years a chorister and valued worker in connection with the Parish Church. Mr. Ediss, who was approaching his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, was a familiar and venerable figure in the borough, where he had spent an eminently useful life, and had gained and retained the warm esteem of the hundreds of scholars who passed through his school, and of all with whom he was associated in his other activities. Mr. Ediss came to the Island from Southampton in 1865 to commence his work as head teacher of the Newport National Schools, as they were then called, and for 12 years his late wife was head-mistress at the infants' school. At this time Lieut.-Col. J. Mackenzie Rogan was one of his pupils, and there is little doubt that the knowledge and love of music which Mr. Ediss always endeavoured to instil gave the gallant Colonel the initial incentive towards attaining his distinguished place in the musical world. The success of many of his pupils in business and other walks of life is a tribute to the soundness of Mr. Ediss's work as a teacher, but he will be chiefly remembered by old scholars for his love of music. In his early days at the school he formed an excellent drum and fife band; in which at one time no fewer than 70 boys performed. In those days residents turned out *en masse* on the Mall when the annual Sunday-school tea party was held and a procession took place, headed by the school band. The excellent singing of the scholars, too, was always a feature of the school life, and it was no uncommon sight to see groups of people on the Mall and in West-street listening to their singing of the morning hymn or anthem. For many years Mr. Ediss spent three evenings a week training the choirboys, for 22 years he was organist at the Sunday-school, and, as stated above, he was a tenor singer in the Parish Church choir for 64 years, having continued this labour of love until within a short time of his death. On celebrating his jubilee as a member of the choir Mr. Ediss was entertained by his fellow choristers and other church folk at dinner, and he was similarly honoured after the completion of 60 years' membership in 1926. He had enjoyed remarkably good health, and on the latter occasion it was mentioned that he had missed only one or two attendances or practices during that long period. He had served under five vicars, namely Canon Connor, Archdeacon Haigh, Canon Clement Smith, the Rev. Canon H. E. Sharpe, and the present vicar, Canon C. H. Thompson. When he first joined the choir it consisted of both ladies and gentlemen. There have been 10 organists at the Parish Church during his life as a chorister. In his earlier days he was frequently entrusted with solo parts, and on one occasion was selected to sing in the private chapel at Osborne House in the presence of the late Queen Victoria. Mr. Ediss was a man of artistic tastes and for a time conducted an art class in the town. These tastes have been inherited by his daughters, who are professionally engaged as artists in London.

Mr. Ediss's end came very suddenly. He was painting as usual until a fortnight before the end and kept up his custom of writing three letters daily to his three daughters in London, while another daughter was with him in Newport.

### THE FUNERAL

took place yesterday (Friday), when a large congregation, including many old scholars, attended the first part of the service in the Parish Church, Newport. The service was choral, the clergy and choir meeting the funeral cortege at the west door. The clergy present were the Revs. Canon C. H. Thompson, Miles Atkinson, A. F. Hill, Hon. C.F., and Dr. S. W. Sutton. The mourners were the four daughters of the deceased, the Misses Louise, Caroline, Clytie, and Flora Ediss, Mr. and Mrs. W. Pearce, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Greenfield, Mr. W. Drover, Miss Moon, and Mr. J. H. Black. Among those present were the Mayor of Newport (Mr. H. W. Horan, T.C.), Aldermen J. C. Millgate, J.P., and F. E. Witcher, J.P., Messrs. W. J. Whittington, J.P., R. Bird Cheverton, J.P., H. Shepard, J.P., C.C., W. Ouseley, J.P., E. F. Wray, T.C., F. Damp, T.C., E. R. Dore, T.C., W. T. Collins, T.C., J. L. Mitchell, T.C., G. Long, C. Cowdery, E. H. Abraham, W. H. Baker, P. M. A. Callaghan, E. J. Taylor, J. Scovell, G. Norman, A. Snow, C. H. Cave, W. A. Whitfield, H. Groundsell, R. Barnes, A. T. Barton, W. H. Dann, W. Watson, S. Elliott, W. Dowden, I. W. Pitman, J. Norris, R. Brackey, S. Moody, C. A. Good, J. Upton, E. Huck, E. O. White, J. Rackett, H. Margham, J. Lockhart, W. H. Bullock, W. Jukes, and C. Mursell, Mesdames M. E. Thompon, J.P., Chandler, T.C., G. H. Yelf, and Dudley (representing the Primrose League), R. B. Cheverton, Pitman, Lock, and C. Webb, and the Misses Webb (2), Taylor, Pitman, Moorman, and Liddell and Oram (representing the C.E. Girls' and Infants' School), Mr. W. H. P. Chandler and several senior scholars represented the C.E. Boys' School. Dr. Sutton said the opening sentences, the Vicar read the lesson, and the prayers were said by the Rev. A. F. Hill. ... The service, which musically was a beautiful tribute to the long association of the deceased with the choir, closed with the Dead March in "Saul." The interment was at Newport Cemetery. ... The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. J. Moorman and Son.

Capt. H. G. Adams-Connor, M.V.O., D.L., was unavoidably prevented from attending.

At the meeting of the Town Council on Wednesday Mr. Mitchell said they had suffered a great blow in Newport by the death of Mr. Ediss, who had been a servant of the town for many years. He had lived to a great age. He was a great asset to the town; his work was well done and his race well run. He (the speaker) thought they ought to send a vote of sympathy to the daughters of Mr. Ediss in the great loss they had suffered. Mr. Ediss was at one time a member of the Council. The motion was passed in the usual way.

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