

## Walter Lawrence Edwards

1911 census, 76 Jubilee Terrace, Hunny Hill, Newport, I W

<i>Walter Lawrence Edwards</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>Police Constable</i>	<i>Reading, Berks.</i>
Sarah Ann Edwards	Wife	46		Ventnor, IW
Walter Lawrence Newton Edwards	Son	12	School Boy	Shanklin, IW

Portsmouth Evening News - 27 August 1913

**EX-P.C.'S DEATH.**

**DISMISSAL SEQUEL.**

**PATHETIC EVIDENCE ISLAND INQUEST.**

The Coroner for the Isle of Wight, Mr. F. A. Joyce, held an inquest at Newport on Tuesday evening on the body of ex-Police-Constable Walter Lawrence Edwards, aged 42, who died somewhat suddenly on Monday morning. The Deputy Chief Constable (Supt. J. H. Gallaway) and Inspector Sibbick were present on behalf of the police, and Messrs. I. H. Brown and T. Hobbs, members of the I.W. County Council, who have been foremost in promoting the petition, signed by some 5,000 people of the Isle of Wight for presentation to the King, protesting against the alleged wrongful dismissal of Edwards, and asking for an impartial inquiry by a Commissioner from the Home Office into the circumstances, were also present.

Sarah Ann Edwards, widow of the deceased, who gave her evidence with much emotion said that deceased had not been well since he had an illness in February, 1912, when he was medically attended. Since his dismissal from the force in October last he had been very unwell at times on and off.

The Coroner: He has not recently been attended a doctor? - No, he has not, sir. I wanted him to have a doctor a week before he died, but he would not. He said he would not be well until the petition to the King went up and it was all settled. That worry has been the cause of a lot of this. He has not been well since last October. Prior to that he had nearly always been ailing, but he said he was going to try to hang on to get his pension. At times he hardly knew how to walk when he left home for duty. During the last day or two he was only able to take Bovril and tea. On Saturday he came downstairs and stopped there for a while, but returned to bed about 9.15 p.m. Early on Sunday morning he complained of pains in the chest - his heart had been a trouble for years - and said, "Cis, I am dying." She poulticed him and sent for Dr. Raymond, who came about two o'clock and treated him. Deceased seemed somewhat easier afterwards, but at 6.20 he had another attack and died. Before he died he said his heart ached so.

Witness handed the Coroner a written statement which she said contained what her husband said to her during the last day or two of his life.

The Coroner, after reading the paper, said he did not think he could deal with that statement as it did not come within the scope of that inquiry, though he felt very much for the widow in her position.

The Widow: I thought you would like to see what my husband said to me during the last hours.

## **MEDICAL EVIDENCE.**

Dr. Raymond said he had attended deceased off and on for the last year. He attended him early last year for influenza, and since for a sprained ankle. Early on Sunday morning he found deceased suffering from considerable pain, and ordered him fomentations and gave him medicine, which seemed to relieve him. He thought from the symptoms that deceased was suffering from colic, when at 6.45 a.m. he heard deceased had died he was rather surprised. He made a post-mortem examination and found fatty degeneration of the heart of long standing, the heart being twice the usual size, and the liver and kidneys were in the same condition. He ascribed death to syncope, due to the fatty degeneration of the heart. Deceased had virtually been an invalid for a year or more. Deceased was suffering from a bad heart 15 months ago.

The Coroner said the medical evidence was clear and showed that death might have resulted at any time during the last year. He did not think the case required any further comment from him. There were other matters which did not come within the scope of inquiry of that tribunal; they had only to ascertain the cause of death.

The jury returned a verdict of death from syncope arising from fatty degeneration of the heart, and expressed their sympathy with the widow, and handed their fees to her.

## **WORRIED AND DEPRESSED.**

In the statement referred to above by the widow, it was stated that since his dismissal from the police force deceased had worried a great deal, and was depressed, he always stated that the charge against him was a wicked and unfounded accusation, and when, the Standing Joint Committee declined to hear him or consider his case, after the King had, through the Home Secretary, referred the first petition to the Committee to be dealt with, he became very depressed, feeling that he had been most unjustly deprived of his pension. Lately, when asked to eat he said "Sis, we can't afford it," and only last Friday he said, referring to the second petition, which was almost ready to be sent to the King, "I hope this will soon be settled, as I cannot bear this much longer; it is killing me." Deceased was very depressed also, because, owing to his dismissal, he was unable make the weekly allowance which he had formerly sent to his aged mother.

---

**Portsmouth Evening News - 28 August 1913**

## **EX-P.C. WALTER EDWARDS.**

### **FUNERAL AT NEWPORT.**

The funeral of the late ex-P.C. Walter Edwards, late of the I.W. County Constabulary, took place at Newport on Wednesday afternoon, in the presence of a large assembly, including Mr. J. H. Brown, C.C., and a number of the signatories to the petition for an inquiry into the circumstances of the dismissal of deceased from the police force, Supt. J. H. Gallaway, Inspector Salter, Inspector Sibbick, and other officers, past and present, of the I.W. Constabulary. The widow and her son were the chief mourners. The first part of the service was at the parish church, Newport, and the interment was at Newport Cemetery, the Vicar (Rev. H. E. Sharpe) officiating. There were many floral tributes, including one from the signatories to the petition, another from the officers of Parkhurst Convict Prison, one from deceased's friends at Hunnyhill, and one, in the form of a policeman's helmet, from the staff of the Warburton's Hotel.

## **THE PETITION**

It has been decided to send the petition, which has been signed by some 5,000, for presentation to the King, asking for an inquiry to the Home Secretary, with the object of endeavouring to clear the deceased's name of stigma, and of securing a grant for the widow and son of deceased from the superannuation fund, to which deceased had contributed for some twenty years.

---

**Portsmouth Evening News – 13 September 1913**

### **DISMISSED ISLAND CONSTABLE.**

#### **THE PETITION TO THE KING.**

The presenters of the second petition to the King, signed by 5,000 inhabitants of the Island, asking for an inquiry into the circumstances of the dismissal of the late ex-Police-Constable Edwards from the I.W. County Constabulary, for alleged drunkenness have received the following reply from the Home Office: "I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that the petition in the case of the late ex-Police Constable Walter Edwards, which you forwarded on the 27<sup>th</sup> ult., has been laid before the King, and the Secretary of State has advised his Majesty that as the matter referred to has been decided by the Standing Joint Committee, the authority in which final responsibility is vested by law, no further action can be taken."

*Transcribed by Tony Barton for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries © 2019*  
<https://www.foncc.org.uk>