

**Edward Munden**

**The Evening News - 17<sup>th</sup> February 1937**

**Ex-MAYOR OF NEWPORT**

**Reported Missing**

Mr. E. Munden, 77-years-old ex-Mayor of Newport, and well known tradesman, is missing from his home at Broadlands, Newport.

He left his shop in High Street, Newport, during Monday morning and gave the impression that he might be going to Portsmouth, but his wife, son-in law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Spencer, who assist him in the business, have not heard from him since.

It has been ascertained that he purchased a ticket for Portsmouth at Newport Railway Station on Monday.

Mr. Munden lost his first wife, a well known writer of verse and hymns, a few years ago.

A description of Mr. Munden is as follows; Height, 5ft. 6in.; medium build; grey hair; clean shaven; wearing glasses. Dressed in a dark grey suit, dark overcoat, wore grey spats and carried a walking stick. He is slightly lame.

Mr. Munden had been slightly depressed recently and had complained of feeling pains in the head. It is thought that he may be suffering from loss of memory.

---

**The Evening News - 6<sup>th</sup> March 1937**

**Newport Ex-Mayor**

**Still Missing**

**No News for Three Weeks**

Nearly three weeks after he left his shop in Newport to go to Portsmouth, Mr. Edward Munden, an ex-Mayor of the town, is still missing.

His description has been circulated to police stations, but no news of him has been received.

It is now feared that harm may have befallen him.

---

**The Evening News - 10<sup>th</sup> April 1937**

**STOP PRESS**

Body on Eastney Beach: A Body which was washed up on Eastney beach, Southsea, to-day, bore papers in the name of Mr. E. Munden. It is believed that it is that of the ex-Mayor of Newport, who has been missing for the last two months. Mr. A. H. Spencer, Mr. Munden's son-in law, is coming to Portsmouth to endeavour to identify the body.

The remains were unrecognisable, but the clothing and contents of the dead man's pocket left no doubt the body was that of the ex-Mayor.

---

**The Evening News - 12<sup>th</sup> April 1937**

**ISLAND GROCER'S SAD END**

**An Ex-Mayor of Newport**

**PORTSMOUTH INQUEST EVIDENCE**

The City Coroner (Mr. P.H. Childs, J.P.) conducted an inquest at the Guild-hall this afternoon on the body of Edward Munden (77), a grocer, of 128, High Street, Isle of Wight., who had been missing since February 15, and whose body was discovered on the beach at Eastney on Saturday morning at 9.20.

Mr. T. Ross Pratt, of Newport, watched the proceedings on behalf of three daughters.

Alfred Henry Spencer, son-in-law, gave evidence of identification by means of clothing and articles in the pockets. He said that Mr Munden resided at 1, Staplers Road, Newport, a driving licence and bunch of keys were among the articles found. On Monday February 15, Mr. Munden attended the shop about 8.30 a.m. and appeared as usual. He left between 11 and 11.15, saying he would buy lemons in King Street. Before actually leaving up a timetable and looked at it.

Next day witness received a message that Mr. Munden was not at home, and a description was circulated. Witness understood that Mr, Munden occasionally came to Portsmouth in the afternoons with Mrs. Munden. Among articles found in the clothing was a return half ticket from Newport to Portsmouth Harbour, issued on February 15. Witness noticed on that day that Mr. Munden was a little bit quiet. He did not say much - very often he did not.

Witness did not know any reason why Mr. Munden should disappear. To the best of his knowledge the deceased man's affairs were in satisfactory condition, and as regards his family affairs he did not disclose them to witness. The ticket found was punched.

Answering Mr. Pratt, witness said that since the disappearance the bank manager was perfectly satisfied.

**“Had Heard Him Threaten Suicide”**

The widow said that she was Mr. Munden's second wife. On February 15 her husband had breakfast at the usual time and left as usual for business. That was the last time she saw him alive. He did not suggest that he was going to Portsmouth. About two years ago her husband fell of a chair and hurt his head. Since then he had complained of headaches, and had done so the previous Friday. He did not worry about anything, but she had heard him twice threaten suicide, though she did not take him seriously. There had been a little awkwardness at times about disparity in ages.

By Mr. Pratt: It was the first time her husband has been to Portsmouth without her.

The Coroner: Was he still interested in public affairs?

Witness: No; he never went out.

Mrs. Leal, of 48, Caesars Road, Newport, said she was a passenger on a steamboat going at 12.35 p.m. from Ryde to Portsmouth Harbour on February 15. She saw Mr. Munden there just before they left the boat, at the gangway.

**Recovery of the Body**

Mr. Earnest Moth, of 65, Edgware Road, Milton, said that near Fort Cumberland he saw what he thought was a bundle of “clothes” in the water. He waded out about 20 yards, and found the body, got it ashore and telephoned for the police.

P.C. C. H. Masters spoke of the removal of the body to the mortuary and the discovery of articles in the clothing. In a wallet was a visiting card reading "Councillor E. Munden. J.P., Mayor of Newport."

Dr. Harmer Hodges, Police Surgeon, said that when he examined the body there was a scar at the back of the head about two inches long, but apart from this there were no injuries except those received after death, which took place about two months ago and was due to drowning,

Mrs. Ella Andrews, a daughter, said that Mr. Munden had a scar from a carbuncle at the back of the head. Her father had very bad eyesight.

James Potterill, Southern Railway Company detective, said that on February 15 repairs were being effected at the Harbour station and this made for more safety than ordinarily because workmen had put up fences

Answering Mr. Pratt, witness said that chains were on the landing stage, and it was possible for anyone to overbalance those, but this would be seen by a purser, unless the person arrived very early.

The Coroner elicited that Mr. Munden's watch was stopped at 6.20, and that a steamer left Portsmouth Harbour just after 6 p.m.

### **Verdict of Suicide**

The Coroner said he reluctantly came to the conclusion that Mr. Munden committed suicide and that the balance of his mind was disturbed at the time. Death took place about 6.20 p.m. on February 15.

"I very much regret" said Mr Childs, "That the Gentleman who had held such a distinguished position in public affairs in Newport, and the Isle of Wight, should have come by his death in this way." The Coroner expressed sympathy with relatives.

*Transcribed by Roger O'Nions for the friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries 2018*

<https://www.foncc.org.uk>