

William Webb

Isle of Wight Observer - 3 March 1900

SHOCKING RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT NEWPORT

An inquest was held at the Royal I.W. Infirmary and County Hospital, on Monday afternoon, touching the death of William Webb, a baker, aged 59, of 41, Pyle Street, Newport. The jury, of which Mr. Biggs was the foreman, having viewed the body, the following evidence was taken:

Walter James Rugg, tobacconist, of Lower St. James's Street, Newport, deposed that on Saturday evening, about 25 minutes past six, he was at the Newport Railway Station. He was standing opposite the General Waiting Room, and saw deceased pass close to him. Deceased was carrying some box or parcel. There were about three or four feet between witness and the edge of the platform. The bulk of the passengers by the Ryde train had then all gone. The deceased was walking on the side of the platform when he appeared to make a false step, and fell over the side of the platform on to the line below. Some woman who was there tried to save him, and had not some one caught hold of her, she would have also gone over with deceased. The Sandown train was just approaching, and was very close. When deceased fell he should not think he was more than 25 or 30 yards away from the advancing engine. The engine struck deceased, and the train pulled up about 12 or 15 yards beyond the place where deceased fell. Witness struck a match and helped to look for deceased, and found him but a short distance from the brake attached to the engine; he was under the brake. Some of the officials then disconnected the engine, and witness, with two or three of the porters, tried to get him out. Witness lifted him, and could feel, directly he got hold of him, that he had very seriously injured his right leg, and that it must have been very badly crushed. Deceased was placed upon a shutter, and taken to the General Waiting Room, and after he had been attended to he was conveyed to the Ryde Hospital about half-past seven, by the ambulance.

The Coroner.- Do you think, as far as your judgment goes, it was an accident? - A pure accident, sir. No one was to blame. It all happened because he was so blind he could not see the edge of the platform.

You didn't know he had been to the Hospital for his eyes? - Deceased told me. I asked him where he lived, and said Newport, and added "Don't keep me here long, I am so cold. I have just come from the Eye Hospital, where I have been about my eyes." There was plenty of room for deceased if he could have seen where to go.

Ann Webb, widow of the deceased, deposed that her husband had been suffering from his eyes, and in consequence, about three weeks ago, went to the Eye and Ear Infirmary at Southsea. On Saturday last witness had a letter from one of the nurses to say that her husband was coming home on Saturday evening. She did not go to meet her husband, as she had no one in the bakehouse, and her husband had not let her know when he was coming.

Dr. Davies, one of the Medical Officers of the Infirmary, deposed that he saw the deceased on Saturday about half-past ten. On examining deceased he found him suffering from shock and collapse. He found a fracture on the right side, and did what was necessary. He considered his condition very serious from the first.

Ann Strange, nurse at the Royal I.W. County Hospital, deposed that she was present when deceased was brought there at a quarter to nine. He was at once taken to the ward. The house surgeon was there. Deceased was suffering from a fractured femur and tibia. He had also two bad wounds in the leg. He was conscious. He died about 2.35 that (Monday) morning.

The Coroner said the facts seemed very plain. This unfortunate man had been suffering from his eyes and, by the advice of his medical man, he went to the Eye Infirmary at Southsea. He supposed they must have considered him better as they sent him home, and as he alighted from the train and was walking along the platform, owing his defective sight, he fell over on to the line, and the train came along and crushed him, inflicting the injuries from which he died. He thought it was a pure accident, and no one was to blame. If the poor man had had proper sight it would not have occurred.

The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

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