

## Henry William Stay

### 1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census Whippingham, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England

Name	Relationship	Status	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Hy Wm Stay	Head	Married	32	Railway carrier	Whippingham, Isle of Wight
Emma J Stay	Wife	Married	32		Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight
Kate F Stay	Daughter	Single	6	Scholar	Whippingham, Isle of Wight
Fredk W Stay	Son	Single	4	Scholar	Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight
Dorothy R E Stay	Daughter	Single	6mths		Whippingham, Isle of Wight
James Sweetingham	Mother-in-law	Married	64		Wanborough, Dorset
Frederick Wm Major	Boarder	Single	31	Asst. Supt	Rudford, Dorset

### Isle of Wight Observer 2 June 1900

#### NEWPORT

#### Sad Fatality

A shocking fatal accident occurred at Newport late on Wednesday night, the victim being Henry Stay, a carman, 40 years of age, in the employ of the Isle of Wight Central Railway Company. It appears that shortly before eight William Deacon was riding a pony at Carisbrooke, when it started, and the rider losing all control, the animal came on through High Street, Newport. When opposite Mr. Trenchard's it struck a large van of which deceased had charge. The impact caused the driver's horse to bolt, and the deceased fell between his horse and van fracturing his skull. He was dragged a considerable distance, the wheel passed over him, and in addition he was kicked by the startled animal. He was taken to his home in an unconscious state by members of the St. John's Ambulance, and was attended by Dr. Coombes. He succumbed to his injuries half an hour after the accident.

#### The Inquest

The inquest was held at the White Lion, on Thursday. The first witness called was William Deacon, aged 16, of New Cut, Newport, who stated that Biles, a dealer, put him on the pony near the cemetery at Carisbrooke. Thought some one must have struck the animal as it bolted and galloped down the road and into the High Street, and ran into the van deceased was driving. The horse in the van was going at a walking pace. The wheels came off the van, and witness was thrown off the pony. Could not stop the pony as the rein was broken.

A Juror (Mr. Alderslade).—Do you think it was right to mount the pony with a broken rein?—It had never acted like this before.

By the foreman.—He ran right into the back of the van with considerable force.

By a Juror (Mr. Airs).—There was another pony ridden by Charlie Ash.

Mr Airs (a juror) said the ponies came along at the rate of twenty miles an hour.

In reply to other questions, the witness said he stuck to the pony as best he could. With his right hand he clung to the mane of the pony—one of the reins was broken. He tried to turn it round Mill Street, but could not. He was riding bare back. Both ponies were entered for the races at Ryde today.

Mr. Flux (a juror) said he was an eye-witness of the occurrence, and denied that witness had a broken rein; he was handling both reins.

Witness replied that one was a broken rein. He did not work regularly for Mr. Biles.

P.S. Spanner deposed to seeing the last witness on a pony coming down the High Street full gallop. The lad had hold of it by the mane with one hand and the rein in the other. He could not say whether he had two reins or not. He saw the pony strike the railway van as though it would have tried to jump it. Immediately the horse began pulling, the body of the van went away from the springs in the hind wheels, and the pony's leg went over the axle. The moment the horse started the body of the van came right away, because it was all rotten. He produced some of the woodwork. The boy was thrown off the pony. Witness asked him what caused the pony to run away. He said that some one hit it with a whip. Seeing it was bleeding very much, he told him to take it home. Witness then went over to the entrance to Mr. Wadham's shop, lower down the street, where he found the deceased lying in an unconscious state and being attended to by several members of the St. John's Ambulance. Dr. Coombes subsequently arrived, and the body was removed on the ambulance to deceased's home at Bartons Village.

By a juror.—It is a very old van. I am informed that if the van had been in a proper state the force of the blow would not have broken it.

Dr. Coombes ventured the opinion that the force of the impact must have been sufficient to have broken the pony's breast bone. He heard that it was coming as fast as it could.

A Juror said the boy was doing his best to keep on the pony. The pony had been killed.

George Gray, a dealer, living on Hunnyhill, said that he was standing by the fountain last evening when he noticed a pony coming down the street as a fast trot. The deceased tried to pull his van away to let the pony pass, and as he was doing so the pony smashed into the van. The van swerved, and the horse bolted and come down the street towards him very fast. The deceased was in a very dangerous position between the footboard and the breeching of the horse. No one could help him, and he could not help himself. He held on as long as he could, and then fell and was beaten to death. The horse went on as far as Mr. Bishop's.

Frederick Booker, corroborated.

Dr. Coombes deposed that when he reached the scene of the accident he found the deceased lying in a pool of blood, and saw there was no hope for the poor fellow. He felt his pulse and found it flagging. He had deceased placed on the ambulance, and he died on the way home. Death was due to the fracture of the skull.

Mr. Conacher, general manager of the Railway Company.—Was that due to the plunging or kicking of the horse, or to his being dragged along the ground?—Well I can hardly say. It must have been a violent blow to have produced such a fracture.

Mr. Alderslade (a juror).—My son saw it, and he says the wheel went over his head.

Dr. Coombes.—I should think so.

Mr. Airs (a juror) thought there were two points they ought to clear up—who hit the pony, and the condition of the van.

William Biles, dealer, Scarrots lane, Newport, stated that Deacon occasionally rode a pony for him. Yesterday he gave him a “chuck” up on the pony when they were between the Nunnery and the Cemetery at Carisbrooke, and he saw him start off. The pony was not hit at all, and he must have seen it if it had been. He was the only person in the road at the time. He had had the pony killed this morning, as she was paralyzed.

Charles Ash, a boy who was with the parties on the hill at Carisbrooke, and rode another pony, denied having whipped the runaway which Deacon rode.

Mr. Flux (a juror) to witness.—I heard you say when you came up on your pony “It serves the --- right; it’s his own fault”. Did you mean the lad or Mr. Stay when you said “it’s his own fault?”

Witness.—I meant the mare which had run away.—In reply to another juror, witness said he had no conversations with Biles or Deacon as to what he should say.

Mr. Airs, a juror, said he noticed this lad Ash come round the corner of Pyle Street before he had heard of the accident. He was riding a pony at a furious rate. If he had been a policeman he should certainly have locked him up. It was disgraceful.

Mr. Alderslade, another juror, protested against the abominable and horrible language used by the witness in the street; it was quite time it was put a stop to.

Mr. Airs intimated that he quite believed the lads were having a race, in view of what was going on at Ryde that day.

Supt Ayres.—After what has fallen from Mr. Airs I shall subpoena him to appear as a witness against Ash on a charge of furious riding.

Mr. Tuffley, also a juror, complained that Ash would persist in coming through the crowd with his pony.

Mr. Alderslade.—Yes, that is so.

In reply to Mr. Pinnock, a juror, Biles, who had been recalled, said that exercising the ponies had only been going on one night that week. They had not done it on Sundays for the last six months. He had never placed bags over his horses’ heads.

Mr. Conacher asked for an adjournment, as he considered it necessary the Company should have legal advice, seeing that so much turned upon the condition of the van.

Mr. Linington, a juror, stated that if the van had been in good condition the accident would not have happened.

Mr. Osborne, the foreman of the jury, said he had been 45 years in the coach and van building trade. In his opinion the van would not have broken, had it been in proper condition, if two ponies had jumped on it.

Replying to Mr. Airs, Mr. Conacher said he had had no complaint as to the safe running of the van. The wheels were changed in July, 1899. The Company had not been requested to carry out any repairs upon it by the deceased.

Mr. Conacher repeated his request for an adjournment, observing that questions of compensation and liability might arise.

The Deputy Coroner (Mr. H. R. Hooper) said he had no alternative but to grant it, although he did so reluctantly.

Mr. Linington, a juror, said he was willing to subscribe 2s. 6d., if other jurymen would do the same, for the purpose of obtaining legal advice for the widow.

The Deputy Coroner intimated that the Mayor was already at work obtaining subscriptions for the widow and family.

The inquiry was then formally adjourned until Thursday afternoon next.

**Isle of Wight Observer**  
**9 June 1900**

**DEATH OF THE RAILWAY CARMAN**

**Adjourned Inquest.—Jury Censures The  
I.W. Central Railway Company**

The adjourned inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Henry Stay, formerly a carman in the employ of the I.W. Central Railway Company, was resumed at the Town Hall, Newport, on Thursday afternoon, before the Deputy Coroner (Mr. H. R. Hooper). Mr. W. H. Wooldridge appeared for the Railway Company, and called as first witness,

Mr. Charles L. Conacher, the manager of the railway. He said the van which deceased was on when the accident occurred belonged to the company, and that it had been under his observation from time to time. It was used for light passenger parcel traffic. He had not the slightest suspicion that anything was the matter with the van. No complaint was made by deceased or anyone else. It had been repaired from time to time as required. The deceased was accustomed to ride with his feet on the splashboard to facilitate his getting in and out. There was a movable seat inside the van, but the deceased generally sat outside.—By Mr. Flux (a juror).—Plates had been inserted on the bed of the van.

Mr. Flux.—A dozen pieces of tin nailed on.

Mr. Conacher.—I call them plates. The work would be done by a mechanic. I know deceased wouldn't do it himself.—Replying to Mr. Linington (a juror), the witness said that he had absolutely no recollection that Mr. Good, V.S., told him to get a new van, as the present one was not good enough for a young horse. He had no recollection of anything of the kind.

George William Ranger, the stationmaster at Newport said he had known the deceased for 20 years. He never made any complaint that van was not fit to ride in; if he had he should certainly say so. He didn't know there was anything wrong with the van. Nothing heavy was put in it.—By a juror (Mr. Flux): I could not say whether the wheels put on the van twelve months ago were secondhand or not.

Mr. Wooldridge intimated that they were not new.

George Clarke, a blacksmith in the employ of the I.W. Central Railway Company, said in July last he set up the van in the front to make it run more level, and placed nuts and bolts where he considered them necessary. It was taken from the premises in a fair, workable condition and fit for light work. The hind

wheels he put in were secondhand.—By Mr. Flux: He put some plates on the bed of the van, and some steel sheet on the bed and on the sides of the van, to prevent things falling through.—By Mr. Wooldridge: The steel was put there to protect the woodwork and instead of putting a new bottom to the van.

The Foreman: What we should call “bodged up” instead of sending it to a coachbuilder.

Mr. Wooldridge.—Some people would like a new van.

Frederick Hayles, carpenter, in the employ of the Railway Company, said he did the woodwork repairs at the same time as the previous witness did the other repairs. He didn't notice that any of the woodwork was rotten. After repairing the van it was in fair working order. Iron was put on the bed of the van to strengthen the bottom and keep the rub off.—By Mr. Pinnock: It did not strike him that the van was not worth repairing.

Mr. Conacher.—Steel was used instead of wood because it was considered it would strengthen the van. It is more expensive than wood.

The Foreman said these men did not understand the work. These plates were used because they could not get bolts to hold without them when the wood was rotten. The men were not practical.

Mr. Conacher said they had a large staff, and he could not admit that.

Richard James Newman, coach builder, Cross Street, Cowes, said he had had 20 years experience in the trade. The wheels and axles of the van were in good condition, and workable in every way. He had examined the woodwork of the van. Ash often got “cold”, this term being well known in the trade. It was impossible to detect this from the outside appearances.

The Foreman.—Were not the studs broken off on the near side?—Witness: I don't know that they are broken; I did not notice it.

The Foreman.—If you call that van in good condition and fit to work, I will take you down and show it to you?—Witness: I didn't say that the van was in good working condition, but I did say that the defects were not visible.

Alfred Buckler, coach-builder at Mr. Cheverton's, said he saw the deceased on May 5<sup>th</sup> last, and told him that his van was unsafe, and a disgrace to the company. He replied that he could not help it, that the company would rather spend £4000 or £5000 in buying new rolling stock than give him ---.

The Deputy Coroner.—You cannot go into that.

Witness resuming his evidence, said he examined the hind springs and found them all of a rock, whilst the front springs were deep down in the front. It was quite unfit to run as a van.—Cross-examined by Mr. Wooldridge: He saw the van at Messrs Mew and Trickett's whilst he was delivering goods. Witness did not take the trouble to tell the company about.—By the Foreman: He put the wheels on himself last July. They were second-hand wheels, but very good. The body of the van was very bad indeed. Anyone with the slightest knowledge could have seen the van was quite unfit for work.

Robert Ball, carriage builder, of New Street, Newport, said the deceased was a friend of his and some time ago he lent him a shaft to replace a broken one in his van, whilst the company was repairing it. He having examined the hind springs, told the deceased that the van was not safe. The van was never built to carry loads.—In reply to Mr. Wooldridge, the witness said he never reported the matter to the Railway Company. He didn't think it his duty to do so. Mr. Stay was a friend of his, and he would have lent him a van if he had had one.

Mr. Wooldridge, addressing the jury, said the Company deeply regretted the loss of an exceedingly good and valuable servant. As a jury, the only matter they had to decide was as to the cause of death, whether it was due to an accident or otherwise, or to the culpable negligence of any person. Now, he should submit that this unfortunate accident is due to the running away of a pony at a furious rate, and coming smash into the tail-end of the van. It was not for them to conjecture whether it would have occurred if the van had been in a different condition. All that concerned them was whether it was in a proper condition for use under ordinary conditions, and not with a view to a prospective collision. The deceased was going about his work in an ordinary way when a collision occurred, and he was either kicked to death or perhaps struck by a piece of the van. It was a case of accidental death, and he had no doubt but that the Company would be prepared to do what was right and proper to assist the poor widow and children, as all Railway Companies did. In conclusion Mr. Wooldridge asked the jury not to allow prejudice or sentiment to affect their verdict in any way.

The Deputy Coroner then carefully summed up, remarking that it was undoubtedly a case of accidental death, and intimating that the question of adding a rider to the verdict was a matter for the jury alone to decide. The company had come forward with the best explanation they could give to exculpate them for any blame, though at the same time there must be a suspicion in the minds of some that their rolling stock was not altogether what it should have been. Still, that was not a question for him to determine, but for the jury.

After some consultation, the jury retired for discussion, and upon their return, after an absence of half an hour, the foreman said the juror returned a verdict of "Accidental death" with the following riders: (1) That the jury deprecate the practice of riding horses in the roads and streets to the danger of the public, and call upon the police authorities to put a stop to this dangerous practice. (2) That great blame is due to the Railway Company for the bad condition of the van at the time of the accident.

The jury also placed on record their deep sympathy with the widow and children of the deceased.

## NEWPORT

**The Late Accident—Funeral of the Victim**—The funeral of the late Mr. Henry Stay, carman, in the employ of the Isle of Wight Central Railway Company, of Barton's Village, who was killed in the shocking trap accident in the High Street, on Wednesday evening, took place on Sunday afternoon, at St. Paul's in the presence of several thousand people, whose attendance manifested the respect in which deceased was held. The route from deceased's home to St. Paul's Church, and thence to the new burial ground was thronged with people. The polished coffin, which was covered with floral tributes, including those sent by the Manager (Mr. Chas. L. Conacher) and employees of the Isle of Wight Central Railway Company, was carried in an open hearse, brother Foresters acting as bearers. The Mayor (Mr. G. B. Purkis) and Mr. Conacher walked at the head of the long procession of railway employees and members of the local Court of Foresters, with Br. E. F. Wray, Chief Ranger, and other officers. At the church "O rest in the Lord" was played on the organ as the procession entered, the funeral psalm was chanted, "Brief life is here our portion" was sung, and the Vicar (the Rev. W.H. Nutter) read the lessons. At the graveside the Foresters' funeral service was read by Br. Wray.—The Rev. W.H. Nutter concluded the church service, and the hymn, "Now the labourer's task is o'er", was sung by St. Paul's choir.

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