

William Wheeler

Isle of Wight County Press

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NEWPORT

**SUDDEN DEATH ON THE ROAD.** – On Wednesday the Deputy Coroner (F. A. Joyce, Esq.) held an inquest at the Town-hall on the body of William Wheeler, aged 72, labourer, of 2 Wapshottsterrace, Cross-lane, who was found lying in Staplers-road, between St. Paul's Church and the Vicarage entrance, on Monday afternoon. – George Wheeler, drover, of Trafalgar-road, said deceased, who was his brother, called on him at about 1p.m. on Monday, when he complained of rheumatism. He had never been medically attended. He was formerly a farm labourer, but latterly had only done casual gardening and other work. – Mrs. J. Harley of St. Paul's View, said deceased called on Monday afternoon, between 1 and 2, as he often did, and remained nearly two hours. He looked rather pale and complained of rheumatism. Some time ago he was very poorly for a while. He lived alone, and for that reason they sometimes gave him a dinner, and she sent him one on Sunday. She thought he had enough food. She offered to make him some tea on Monday, but he wished her not to do so, and she gave him some ham to take home for his tea. – Ernest Flower, engine-driver, of Cross-lane, said that at about 3.45 p.m. on Monday he was standing at the corner near St. Paul's Church, when on looking down the road he saw the body of a man lying near the Vicarage gate. It could only have been there a minute, as he had looked that way just before without seeing it. He ran to the spot and found Dr. MacCurdy, who had just got out of a motor car, looking at deceased, and he pronounced him dead. – John Thomson MacCurdy said he was not a qualified doctor in this country, but he practised medicine in America, and was temporarily staying at Fishbourne. He was driving home up the Staplers-road on Monday afternoon, when he saw the deceased lying on his back in the middle of the road, having apparently collapsed and fallen backwards. There was no sign of anything having collided with the deceased. He was still gasping but was dying, and death took place quickly whilst witness was with him. Deceased could not have fallen more than a few seconds before, judging from the traffic on the road. It appeared to be a typical heart failure death. – Dr. Foster said that with Dr. Dowdall he made a post-mortem examination of deceased at the Borough Mortuary. There were no marks of violence on the body, which was in very good condition for a person of that age. The heart was comparatively healthy, though the aorta was slightly atheromatous. The lungs were perfectly healthy. There was an excess of cerebro-spinal fluid on the brain, but no haemorrhage. There was nothing to show any unnatural cause of death. He thought death must have been due to an attack of heart failure. – The Coroner said that deceased might suddenly have collapsed from heart failure, as old people sometimes did, through the slight effort of walking up a hill. Had he died from a stroke the brain would have shown evidence of it. He should return a verdict of "Death from heart failure due to an unascertained natural cause"- Supt. J. Salter was present representing the police.

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