

John Ponsford

1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census
4 High Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, Hampshire

Name	Relationship	Status	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Ann Prior	Head	Unmarried	50	Dressmaker	Arreton, Isle of Wight
Sarah A Chiverton	Niece	Unmarried	17	Dressmaker apprentice	Arreton, Isle of Wight
John Ponsford	Lodger	Widower	68	Retired ironmonger	Weymouth, Dorset
Mary Ann Way	Lodger	Unmarried	54	Income from rents of houses	Wallingford, Berkshire

Isle of Wight Observer - 28 February 1874

Newport

Extraordinary Suicide by a Tradesman. – F.Blake, esq., coroner for the Isle of Wight, held an inquest at the Salisbury Arms inn, Newport, on the evening of Monday last, on the body of Mr. John Ponsford, ironmonger, aged 74.—Miss Ann Prior said that the deceased had lodged with her ever since the death of his wife, upwards of five years ago. Shortly after he came to her house he had a serious illness, when his mind was much affected by strange delusions. He frequently imagined that children were playing about him, when there were none present. When he recovered his bodily health he came to his right state of mind. About three weeks ago the deceased appeared very strange, as one morning when she carried in his breakfast she found him leaning against the wall with his eyes shut, and in answer to her question he said he felt very unwell, but he could not say what was the matter with him. The deceased suffered very much from pains in his head. Last night, about 10 o'clock, he said he wished to speak to her, and then said, "Here is some money for you; I am greatly indebted to you, Miss Prior, for all your kind attention to me": He then put the small parcel produced into her hand. She did not look at it until that evening, when she found it consisted of £22 in gold, wrapped up in two £5 Bank of England notes. The deceased next said, "Give that money to my son; it may be useful to him," and then added, "I am going away for a few weeks." As the deceased had a very strange look, she felt a little alarmed, and, therefore, asked him where he was going. He replied that he could not tell where he was going. As she was about to leave his room, he called out, "There are two sovereigns for you, for all your kindness to me." The two sovereigns were in addition to the money contained with the parcel. She refused to take them, but he insisted on her doing so. After bidding each other "Good night," she retired to her bed room, but could not sleep, as she was afraid the deceased might go out and drown himself. The deceased went to bed at about 11 o'clock, and she heard him cough several times during the night. At a quarter to 8 o'clock that morning, she heard him open his bed room door as was his custom, to look at the clock. About 9 o'clock, as she did not hear him moving about, she went upstairs and pushed the bed room door open, when she saw the deceased hanging from the bedpost. She instantly ran to the next house, where Mr. Foster, surgeon, lives, when Mr. Saunders, the dispenser, came in and cut the body down. The body was warm, but life appeared to be quite extinct. Corroborative testimony having been given, the jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased destroyed himself while in an unsound state of mind.

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