

HORSE KICKS OWNER TO DEATH **Binstead Man's Tragic End**

A dark bay mare which won a prize at a gymkhana last year and had been ridden by children between the ages of eight and 12, kicked to death its owner, Mr. **William Frederick Alexander COOPER** (46), master baker, of the Bakery, Binstead, on Saturday. At the inquest conducted by the Island Coroner, Mr. R.E.A. WEBSTER, at the Royal I.W. County Hospital on Tuesday, a verdict that Mr. COOPER died by "misadventure" was recorded.

The deceased's son, William Thomas COOPER, said he was with his father between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday when they went to catch two horses in the Church Lane field, which deceased and his wife were to have ridden in the afternoon. There were three horses belonging to his father in the field, two of which were quite quiet and which were simply taken back into the road and tethered to the hedge. He saw his father go back into the field again to quieten the remaining horse, as the other two had been fighting it. It was a new horse and "it was having a bit of a time".

His father was going to give it a piece of bread, and as he approached it by its head, the horse "turned round and lashed him". His father seemed to double up. The horse must have struck him once and its hoofs seemed to come up through the bar of the gate. Seeing what had happened, witness called another man, and they carried deceased to the roadway, placed him in a motor-car, and took him to the County Hospital.

Bullied by Other Horses

Answering questions by the Coroner as to whether the horse had been restive before, witness said it had been bullied by the other two horses, and it had then become rather restive.

Were you frightened of it yourself? – I have often ridden it, but my sister and mother rode the horse more. It was purchased for that purpose.

Robert Thomas ROBERTS, riding master, of 2 Sylvan Cottages, Somerset Road, Elmfield, said that at 1.40p.m. on Saturday he went to see deceased at the bakery, having previously told Mr. COOPER he would be down to help him. When he got there Mr. COOPER's son told him that his father had had an accident. Witness saw two horses tethered in the road and the mare loose in the field. Deceased was lying on the ground and witness helped him into a sitting position.

Deceased, however was unconscious and there was blood coming from the left side of the skull. Witness had attended the horses, the one in question being 13 hands high and a dark bay. He had found the horse a quiet sort of animal and could do anything with it within reason.

Had "Kicking Match"

The Coroner : Why do you think she did this? - I think they were all fighting together and they had a kicking match between them and she was a bit restless and wanted to come out with them.

Witness added that he took the mare down to Mr. COOPER when the latter bought her. He knew she was a prize-winner at the gymkhana last year and that children between the ages of 8 and 12 had ridden her. "She was a quiet, nice type of animal," he said, "and she had been in the field about a month. Very often the others in the field, especially the horses, resented another mare being brought in. I expect it was with the others kicking out and she was jealous. I think it was just a piece of friskiness."

Offered to Buy Horse

The Coroner : Would you recommend this horse to be destroyed? - No, sir; I offered to buy the mare this morning. She is not a vicious horse and the real cause of her lashing out was because she was being fresh and having been bullied by the other horses. She has been used to taking ladies and children on her back.

Raymond Thomas COOPER, master baker, of "Glencast," Mayfield Road, Ryde, said the deceased was his brother and in partnership with him. He last saw his brother alive at 12.45 p.m. on Saturday when the latter was about to go up to the horses. His brother was in excellent health, his eyesight and hearing being good. Witness had seen deceased handle the horse.

Dr. N.J. GOURDJI, house surgeon, said Mr. COOPER was admitted to hospital on Saturday in a comatose condition. Witness found Mr. COOPER had a fractured skull and an abrasion on the brain and upper thigh. Mr. COOPER was "in a pretty bad state" and they were unable to do anything for him. He died at 6 p.m., two hours after admission, death being due to laceration of the brain, fractured skull and

considerable haemorrhage, the injuries being consistent with Mr. COOPER have received a heavy blow from a blunt instrument.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Thomas COOPER, of Burnside, Fish-Bourne, the dead man had been running his father's bakery business at Binstead with the help of his brother, Mr. Raymond COOPER, for many years. He was known in practically every town and village in the Island in connection with his business. He was a native of Binstead and emigrated to Canada at the age of 19, returning to the Island nine years later. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Lily COOPER, and two children. His grandmother, Mrs. Alice ALEXANDER, died at the age of 90 some two weeks ago. He was a former member of the Ryde Coronation Lodge of the Loyal Order of Moose, and a member of the Town Club.

The Funeral

The funeral service, which was held at the George Street Baptist Church, yesterday (Wednesday) afternoon prior to interment at Binstead Cemetery, and conducted by the Rev. E. J. WILLIS, was attended by a large and representative gathering. Miss A. WARNE (organist) accompanied the hymn "Abide with me".

The Rev. E.J. WILLIS paid a glowing tribute to the character of Mr. COOPER, who, he said, had won the esteem of all who knew him. Mr. COOPER had excelled in his business, social, church and home life.

The mourners were Bill (son), Mr. F.T. COOPER (father), Mr. R. T. COOPER (brother), Mr. and Mrs. P. ROLFE, Mr. and Mrs. J. FARRAR (sisters and brothers-in-law), Mrs. MAIN (sister-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. A. BARTLETT (uncle and aunt), Messrs. W. and J. ALEXANDER (uncles), Mr. and Mrs. E. BARTLETT (cousins), Messrs. PULLEN and GRIFFIN (also representing Mr. FOSTER), Mr. and Mrs. FAIRELL, Mesdames SIVELL and REYNOLDS, and Mr. V. JOLLIFFE.

Among those present at Church included Messrs. J. HILLIER, T. WILLIAMS, J. JONES, G. GUY, R. ABBOTT, D. SLOPER, K. RAYNER, G.C. PIKE, and Miss C. MUNDELL (representing the staff of Messrs. F.T. COOPER & Sons, Binstead), Mr. P.H. HOLE (representing Messrs. Joseph RANK, Ltd.), Mr. W.G.B. WEEKS (representing Messrs. THOMAS, GATER, BRADFIELD & Co., Ltd.), Mr. C.D. CROUCHER (representing Messrs. W.H. CROUCHER & Son).

Mrs. J.P. CLARK (representing Messrs. J.P. CLARK, Ltd.), Mr. C. MESSENGER (representing the United Yeast Co., Ltd.)

Researched & typed by
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