

Death Notice:-

HALSTEAD.- April 17th at the Royal I.W. County Hospital **Anthony George** son of Corporal and Mrs. G. H. HALSTEAD, aged 3 years.

Child's Fatal Fall. Inquest at Ryde.

An inquest was held in the Primitive Methodist Schoolroom this (Wednesday) morning before Mr. W. H. P. F. THIRKELL (Acting Deputy Coroner of the Island), on the body of Anthony George HALSTEAD, the three year old child of Corporal and Mrs. G. H. HALSTEAD, of 1 High Street, who met his death under the sad circumstances detailed below. Mr. R. BATTERSBY was chosen foreman of the Jury, and the Chief Constable (Mr. Charles GREENSTREET) was present representing the police.

Corporal George Henry HALSTEAD, of the Tank Corps, identified the body viewed by the Jury, as that of his son, Anthony George, aged three years and two months. Witness was not at home on Sunday. He knew the window in question: it was a casement window opening outwards, and not being a room used by the children there were no bars. Witness had four children, all young.

By a juror: There was no balcony and the window was on the second floor.

Hilda Nelly COTTON, said she was a general servant in the employ of Mrs. HALSTEAD at No 1 High Street. On Sunday last witness went up to her bedroom about 3.15 in the afternoon. The room was at the top of the house on the second floor: the window was a casement window opening outwards, with an inside sill about a foot and a half in width. When she went upstairs the window was fastened. The deceased child caught sight of her going upstairs and followed her up the stairs and into the room. He went straight to the window sill and stood on it. Witness told him to get down, but the child did not do so. She went to the dressing table to get her hair brush, and when she turned round the window was open and the child was gone. She heard no sound whatever. She ran downstairs at once, but found the child had been picked up, and was lying on Mrs. HALSTEAD's lap.

By a juror: The window was a double one, opening from the centre.

Hilda RASHLEY, a mother's help in the family of Mrs. HALSTEAD, said she was in the dining room on Sunday afternoon, the window of the dining room being below the window described by the last witness. She saw the deceased fall past the window. Witness went into the garden with Mrs. HALSTEAD, and found the deceased on the ground badly injured. Dr. TURNER was at once sent for, and on arrival soon afterwards, ordered the child's removal to the hospital. The child was quite unconscious when picked up.

Nellie COTTON, recalled, said the child occasionally came upstairs to her room when she was dressing and played on the window sill.

Corpl. HALSTEAD said he had no idea that this was so or he should have forbidden it.

Dr. Arthur Breedon WADE, house surgeon at the Royal I.W. County Hospital, said he saw the child on Sunday afternoon soon after it had been admitted to the hospital. It was suffering from injuries consistent with a fall from a window as was described by the witnesses. The skull was fractured and there was a punctured wound on the side of the head. The case was hopeless from the beginning, and the child died at 8.30 that (Wednesday) morning.

The Coroner in summing up said this was a lamentable occurrence, and all felt the deepest sympathy with Corpl. and Mrs. HALSTEAD. He, however, remembered holding an inquest on a domestic servant some little time ago who had fallen out of a window under much the same circumstances. He could not help thinking that such a window ought to have some sort of protection provided. The child was playing on the sill and they all knew what these "hapses" were: the slightest touch would open them. It seemed to him that Mr. HALSTEAD would be well advised to have some bars put across the window. It was not a nursery or child's room it was true, but he was bound to say that the child ought not to have been there. The only conclusion they could arrive at was that the child met its death accidentally.

The jury found that the child died from a fractured skull, received by an accidental fall.

The Foreman voiced the sympathy of the jury with the bereaved parents, with which the Coroner associated himself.

Much sympathy is felt throughout the town with Corpl. and Mrs. HALSTEAD and the family generally.

Researched & typed by
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