

ISLE OF WIGHT TIMES Thursday June 16th, 1870.

**MELANCHOLY BOAT ACCIDENT OFF RYDE
THREE MEN DROWNED.**

A melancholy accident occurred on Friday afternoon, off Ryde, by which three promising young men met with their deaths. It appears that about 3 o'clock, Messrs. **THURLOW, CLARK,** and **TILLEY** (the first being the son of Mr. Alderman **THURLOW**) entered a boat, 17ft. long, the property of Mr. **MOORE**, dentist, of Ryde, for the purpose of going for a sail in the Solent. Every thing went well until the boat had got three-quarters of a mile or a mile from the shore, when the boy named **GALE**, in the employ of Messrs. **SMITH** and **SON**, and a lad named **HOLBROOK**, a waterman, who were watching the boat, saw her capsize. Without loss of time, both ran to Henry **SOTHCOTT**, who happened to be on the pier head, and informed him of the accident. The gig belonged to the Pearl Pleasure-boat was lying near, and **SOTHCOTT**, the boys, and another man, belonging to the Clutha, cutter yacht, the property of C. **BRETT**, Esq., at once put off and pulled to the scene of the catastrophe, but they were unable to be of any service, for the unfortunate young men had disappeared before the boat reached the spot, and only their hats were picked up. Her Majesty, one of the boats belonging to the Port of Portsmouth and Ryde Steampacket Company, which was just about to leave the pier on the journey to Portsmouth, steamed out to where the boat capsized, but could not, of course, render any assistance. Soon afterwards, other boats put off and cruised about in search of the bodies, but without avail. During the whole of the evening, while daylight lasted, the search was continued, and every possible exertion made to recover the bodies, but in vain.

The sad event has cast quite a gloom over the town, and universal sympathy is felt with the relatives of the deceased. The intelligence of the sad occurrence was conveyed to Mr. Alderman **THURLOW**, when he was presiding at the Liberal committee room, and who, upon hearing the facts, fainted, and was removed to his home. He has since been extremely indisposed. Early on Saturday morning, renewed efforts were made to recover the bodies, but though something that was thought to be one of them was raised some little distance, the hook unfortunately broke owing to the roughness of the sea, and all efforts were obliged to be suspended. A similar result attended the renewal of the search on Sunday morning.

Mr. Alderman **THURLOW** has been, as our readers are aware, recently elected as churchwarden for the parish of Ryde; and the prayers of the congregation worshipping at the temporary church were on Sunday desired on behalf of "Mr. **THURLOW** and his family, now suffering under a heavy domestic bereavement." Prayer was offered on behalf of the afflicted families at many of the dissenting places of worship.

On Monday morning, the search was renewed, and brought to a successful termination. All three bodies were found, under the circumstances detailed in the evidence at the inquest. They were brought ashore and deposited in an out-building the Esplanade hotel. Many persons showed a natural but not very commendable curiosity to inspect the bodies, but Mr. Inspector **BURT**, with praiseworthy consideration for the feelings of the friends of the deceased refused all such applications.

The boatmen deserve great credit for the persevering and active manner in which without offer of a reward, they conducted the search.

THE INQUEST

Was held at the Esplanade hotel, on Monday evening, before Mr. E.F. **BLAKE**, deputy coroner for the Island.

The following evidence was given:-

James **LOWE**; I live at Rose Cottage, West-street, and I am a draper. I identify one of the bodies I have just seen as that of Mr. **Frederick THURLOW**. He was twenty-two years of age.

William HAYDEN; I live at Sandown, and am a draper. I identify one of the bodies just viewed by the jury as that of **Ebenezer TILLEY**, He lived in Arthur-street, Ryde, and was a draper; he was twenty-four years of age last Tuesday.

William CLARK; I live at Strickenham, Middlesex, and am a servant. I identify one of the bodies as that of **James CLARK**; he was my brother, and was in his twentieth year . He lived in Ryde, and was a photographer, he could swim well.

Henry COTTON; I live at Castle-street, Ryde, and am a waterman. I was one of them that went in search of the bodies on Friday evening. This morning, about a quarter before seven, we were near the south-east Sturbridge bouy, to the east of the pier; we had Mr. CURTISS's boat and Mr. OAKLEY's boat dragging, and brought up the body of Mr. CLARK; we brought him ashore. We found him about a mile from the shore, and about the same distance from the pier. There was a strong, fresh breeze, on Friday last. The boat the young men went out in was about 17 feet in length. She would carry a mainsail with one reef down in such weather, if those in her could manage her. I saw Mr. CLARK reefing the sail, about half past ten or eleven o'clock on Friday morning, in the boat; no one else was with him. I did not see him afterwards. The boat belongs to Mr. MOORE. The boat is not ashore now.

Henry SOTHCOTT; I live in Simeon-street, Ryde, and am a waterman. We found TILLEY about half -past eleven this morning. We were out dragging for the deceased. We brought him ashore. We found him about a mile east from the end of the pier. On Friday evening , I saw Mr. MOORE's boat leaving the pier . A man called out to the three young men who were in her. I went up to him and he said there was a party gone out to go round the ships at Spithead, and if they do, they will have to be picked up soon. I walked to my little boat, about fifty yards, and while doing so, two lads came to me and said the boat had capsized. I and the boys and a man belonging to the Clutha yacht at once put off. When about half-a-mile from the pier, I could see something in the water, but could not tell what it was. When we got to the spot, we picked three hats, some boards, a stretcher, and an oar, but though we rowed all about, we could not see either of the young men. When the boat went away, I could see she had two sails set, but I could not see whether or no they were reefed. There was a hard breeze blowing from the west; I have known the boat for many years, and have sailed in her myself; she was, if properly managed, quite safe in such a breeze as blew on Friday. I picked up the body of Mr. THURLOW this afternoon, close to where Mr. TILLEY was picked up. It was the spot where I believe the boat went down. The boat has not been recovered.

Henry SIVELL, a waterman living at Ryde, said he knew the three young men. He saw them on Friday last get under weigh and go eastward in a boat he used to call the Louise. This was between three and four. They were in the act of setting a sail when witness called to them to be careful or they would turn the boat over. They took no notice of what he said, and went away. He saw them go in the direction of Sea view; and when they could go no further for want of water, they gybed with her head to the north-east, towards Spithead. He could see from the way they managed the boat that they did not understand how to do it. He knew all three men, but did not remember ever seeing them in a boat of the kind before. He afterwards went about his work, and heard that the boat had capsized. There was a nice fresh breeze, but nothing to hurt. If the young men had understood how to manage the boat, there was not a bit too much canvas up for such a day as Friday.

William HOLBROOK, a boy living in St. John's-road, Ryde, said he knew all three men by sight. On Friday last, he saw them go down the pier, and get into the boat and shove off. When they got off about fifty yards they hoisted the mainsail; a man named CLARK hoisted the sprit. They sailed down to near the south-west Sturbridge bouy. He watched them and saw them attempt to get the boat round. Directly the sail gybed over, the boat capsized. She sort of come up right a little. He could just see the three heads in the boat; and she then went down. He went to SOTHCOTT, and went out with him in his boat. He thought that the cause of the boat going over was their ignorance of the way to manage her; He thought the young men must have fallen over with the gibing of the sail, and caused her to capsize.

The jury thought a good deal of credit was due to the witness for his conduct, and that he had given his evidence in the most satisfactory manner.

The witness said that on the morning of Friday, he saw CLARK in the boat between the two piers by himself, he then had the same sails as in the evening.

The Coroner said this was about the most painful matter he had ever had to inquire into, but at the same time the evidence was perfectly clear and satisfactory; and he thought he would have no difficulty in returning a verdict of accidental death.

The jury coincided with the opinion of the coroner, and asked the representatives of the press to add that they hoped it would be a caution to other young men not to go out in boats without understanding them.

The coroner said that it was a most lamentable that so many acted so. He was afraid to say how many inquests he held yearly from a similar cause.

THE FUNERALS

The funeral of Mr. **Frederick THURLOW** took place yesterday (Wednesday), at one o'clock. The funeral cortege was a very simple one, consisting only of a hearse and the two mourning coaches. Messrs. MARVIN were the undertakers. Flags were dipped to half-mast, and nearly all the shops in Union-street, and many of those in High-street, were partially closed. The funeral service was read by the Vicar (Rev. Alexander POOLE); and among those who followed the body were the Mayor (the alderman G.F. HARRINGTON), the Ex-Mayor (the Alderman Thomas DASHWOOD), and other members of the corporation. Mr. THURLOW was buried in the same grave as his brother who died some years ago, in the older portion of the cemetery.

Messrs. **TILLEY** and **CLARK** were buried later in the afternoon; they were interred in the unconsecrated ground, side by side, and the Rev. G.A.COLTART, we understand, will endeavour to improve the occasion by a special discourse on Sunday evening next.