

1891 CENSUS: RG12/891. folio 73. page 23.  
Address: 10 Cemetery-street, Ryde, IW.

Harry BALLARD. Head. M. 30. French Polisher (Cabt). Ryde, IW.  
Eliza BALLARD. Wife. M. 29. Hambledon, Hants.  
Mary E. BALLARD. Dau. 7. Scholar. Ryde, IW.  
**Harold BALLARD. Son. 3. Ryde, IW.**  
Walter BALLARD. Son. 11months. Ryde, IW.

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1901 CENSUS: RG13/1024. folio 66. page 43.  
Address: 11 Cemetery-street, Ryde, IW.

Harry BALLARD. Head. M. 39. French Polisher. Ryde, IW.  
Eliza BALLARD. Wife. M. 40. Hambledon, Hants.  
Mary BALLARD. Dau. S. 17. Nursemaid Domestic. Ryde, IW.  
**Harold BALLARD. Son. 13. Office Boy (Port). Ryde, IW.**  
Walter BALLARD. Son. 10. Ryde, IW.  
Daisy BALLARD. Dau. 8. Ryde, IW.  
Ethel BALLARD. Dau. 1. Ryde, IW.

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1910 KELLY'S DIRECTORY pages 289 & 294  
**BALLARD** Harry, 27 Weeks-road, Ryde, IW.

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ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August 1914

Death Notice –

**BALLARD** .. On August 21<sup>st</sup>, **Harold BALLARD**, of Weeks Road, Ryde, aged 26 years.

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ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August 1914

### SAD DROWNING FATALITY

This (Friday) afternoon an inquest was held by the Deputy Coroner (Mr F A JOYCE) at the Primitive Methodist Schoolroom to investigate the circumstances attending the death of **Harold BALLARD**, aged 26 years, a railway porter in the employ of the Joint Railway Companies at the Ryde Pier Head, whose mysterious disappearance from his duties since last Friday night was not solved until his body was found floating near the east end of the Pier early on Thursday morning.

Mr W H P F THIRKELL was present on behalf of the parents of the deceased, and Mr J BREWER, solicitor from the London and South Coast Railway Company, watched the interests of the Joint Railway Companies.

Harry BALLARD, of 27, Weeks' Road, a French polisher, with whom the deceased lived, gave evidence of identification. When his son did not return home on Friday night they thought he had to wait for the mail boat to come over in the morning. It was the last thought he (witness) would have that the deceased would contemplate suicide.

Mrs Clare COLEMAN, manageress of the Pier Head Refreshment Rooms, stated that about 8 o'clock on Friday night deceased entered the refreshment rooms and had a glass of stout, as was his usual custom when on nightduty. He stayed about a quarter of an hour, and was quite sober and happy.

Charles LODDER, a collector in the employ of the Ryde Pier Company, said he saw the deceased on Friday night between 8.20 and 8.30. He passed through the sliding gate on to the railway pier.

By Mr THIRKELL: He was probably on the way to the porter's room.

Alfred Charles LININGTON, boatman, of Granville House, Nelson Street, proved recovering the body at 5.15a.m. on Thursday morning.

Dr P D TURNER deposed to examining the body. He found no signs of injury, except such as would be caused by the body being in the water.

By Mr THIRKELL : Deceased might have received a blow on the head without any mark showing.

The Deputy Coroner said he thought it would be as well at that stage of the inquiry to have evidence as to the repairs which he understood had been going on for some time past at the Pier Head.

Oliver George SMITH, 20 Surrey Street, foreman of the engineers' department of the Joint Railway Companies, stated that the repairs which had been going on necessitated the removal of some of the decking. Such work was going on near the porters' room as shown by the plan produced. A barrier prevented the public from having access to that part of the pier. The porters would have to get under the barrier to go to their room. At the corner where they had to turn there was a boarded platform from 4ft. 9in. to 5ft. wide. There was a lamp near by. He did not think it was possible for anyone to stumble into the water from the boarded platform. In his opinion it was not dangerous and if a lamp was burning it would be absolutely safe at night.

The Deputy Coroner pointed out there was no evidence to show that deceased had fallen in at this spot.

By a juror, the witness said these boards had been in the present position from three weeks to a month.

By Mr BREWER : There were many places on the pier where a person might fall into the sea. The deceased would of course know the right way round to the porters' room. Assuming the man tripped over the boards he would have to take a kind of running dive for 3ft. 6in. before he fell over into the sea. There was no rail to prevent him falling into the water.

Ernest SHEPHERD, Caen Cottage, St John's Park, night porter at the Pier Head, said the light referred to by the witness SMITH was not burning on the night in question, but there was a light just inside the porters' room which would show out to this place. There would also be a light from the window of the lavatory, which, together with the other one would give a fairly good light at the place referred to.

By the foreman : If a man tripped on the boards referred to, there was a possibility of his falling into the water.

The jury after consulting in private returned a verdict of "Found drowned" but there was no evidence to show how the deceased got into the water. They wished also to add a rider that they considered there was not sufficient light where the repairs had been carried out.

Mr and Mrs BALLARD desire, through our columns, to acknowledge the many sympathetic messages they had received in their sad bereavement.

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