

BIRTH: 1898 Ryde (IW Registrars ref: R68/E168)
Charles GAWN (Mother's maiden name JUPE)

1901 CENSUS: RG13/1026. folio 34. page 14.
Address: 11 Victoria Crescent, St. John's, Ryde, IW.

Thomas GAWN. Head. M. 48. Customs Officer. Ryde, IW.
Jane GAWN. Wife. M. 47. Godshill, IW.
Amelia GAWN. Dau. S. 24. Ryde, IW.
William GAWN. Son. 16. Gardener. Ryde, IW.
John GAWN. Son. 14. Ryde, IW.
Edith GAWN. Dau. 10. Ryde, IW.
Lydia GAWN. Dau. 8. Ryde, IW.
Charles GAWN. Son. 2. Ryde, IW.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS Saturday, October 4, 1902 Page 8

SAD TRAGEDY AT RYDE.
MOTHER AND CHILD DROWNED.

On Thursday afternoon, at about 2 o'clock, George HAYLES, of Weeks, found the body of Mrs. GAWN, aged 47, living at The Crescent, High-park, the wife of a Customs officer, named Thomas GAWN, on the Ryde sands. Some time afterwards, at about 4.45, the body of her little boy, four years and three months old, was found in the sea, near the Cornwall-street slipway by Jacob BENGER, a young man staying at Hazelwood. Both bodies were taken to the mortuary, where the body of the man drowned on Wednesday was still lying, making three drowning cases in two days. It is stated that Mrs. GAWN left home in the morning, at about 9 o'clock, stating that she was going to Ryde shopping. On her way she called at the Infant-school and took the child with her. She had been ill for some time, but for the last two months her health and spirits had been much better.

Miss YOLLAND, head-mistress of the infant-school, Oakfield, states that Mrs. GAWN came to the school at about 10.10 and asked if she could have the child. While the latter was having its clothes put on she noticed tears in her eyes and asked what was the matter. She said she was rather upset through reading about the man who was picked up drowned. He came to the house begging and she sent him away without giving him anything. Miss YOLLAND said she could not see anything strange about the deceased. She wished her and the boy good-bye and Mrs. GAWN said the latter would be at school in the afternoon.

The inquest took place yesterday (Friday) afternoon before the Deputy Coroner (F.A. JOYCE, Esq.), in the Primitive Methodist School. Mr. WHITTINGTON was the foreman of the jury.

George HAYLES, labourer, Lower Quarry-road, said that just after 2 on the previous afternoon on looking over the Victoria Pier he saw something floating in the water, which was three, four, or five feet deep. He and a man named REEVES launched a boat and found it to be the deceased. It was high water at about noon.

Jacob BENGER (*sic*), hotel waiter, of London, deposed that while walking along the beach at 4.30 p.m. on Thursday he saw something on the beach. With his friend he went and found it to be the body of a boy. He waited till the police arrived. Did not think the boy had been long in the water. Deceased's blue tam o'shanter was still on his head.

Stephen GAWN, son of the deceased, a sailor home on leave, said he last saw his mother

alive at 9 a.m. on the previous day at home and his brother on Wednesday night. On Thursday his mother said she was going to Ryde on business. At that time she was in her usual health. She did not say anything about getting the boy from the school. That was an extra-ordinary thing for her to have done. She had been away a fortnight in August for her health's sake, by the doctor's orders. She had been in a low state, but seemed better since he had been home. On Wednesday she said she would go and see witness on H.M.S. Victory on his return.

By the Jury: Went to try and find her, when she did not return to dinner, but could not do so.

Miss YOLLAND deposed in accordance with the particulars given above.

Thomas GAWN, deceased's husband, said she (*sic*) last saw deceased at 7.30 a.m. on Thursday, when she seemed brighter than for a long time. They had always lived happily and comfortably together. Deceased had been in poor health for 18 months. He had never heard her say anything about committing suicide. On Wednesday evening she referred to the drowning of the man WARDER and said she was sorry she had turned him away so many times. Witness said they could not buy from every one who came to the door, or they would fill the house, and the subject then dropped. Dr. PRESTON had advised a change, but deceased improved very much on hearing that her son was homeward bound from China. The report that deceased had previously attempted suicide was totally untrue.

Dr. WOODWARD said he found bruises on the left side of the forehead of the deceased woman and a contusion on the left side of the scalp behind. These were probably produced by a fall, but were not sufficient to cause death. There were no marks of violence on any part of the child's body. There were only the ordinary signs of drowning.

The Deputy Coroner, in summing up, said it was a very curious thing that the last inquest he had held, on the previous day, was one of drowning. One wished to be charitable, as far as possible, and give the deceased the benefit of the doubt, but they had to recollect the evidence of the relations that she had been depressed and that she had called and taken the child away from school at an unusual time, and that the child was found drowned. Connecting these things, and having regard to the very peculiar conversation she had with the mistress of the school, it seemed that the only verdict was that the poor woman, in a fit of depression, first drowned the child and then herself. There were points of doubt about the case and they could only go by inference.

The jury, having consulted in private, found that Mrs. GAWN drowned herself and the child while temporarily insane.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS Saturday, October 11, 1902

Death Notice:-

GAWN. – On the 2nd instant, Jane, the beloved wife of Thomas Adams GAWN, aged 47; on the 2nd instant, **Charles**, youngest son of Thomas Adams Gawn, aged 4. – Mr. Thomas Adams Gawn and family return sincere thanks for sympathy and wreaths from many friends in the recent bereavement.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS Saturday, October 11, 1902 Page 8

FUNERAL OF THE VICTIMS OF THE RECENT TRAGEDY

The remains of the late Mrs. GAWN and her child, who were drowned last week, under such distressing circumstances, were interred at the St. John's Cemetery on Monday. The first part of the service was taken at St. John's Church, when a large congregation was present. Mrs.

GAWN's body was enclosed in a polished elm coffin with brass mountings. The plate bearing the inscription "Jane GAWN, died October 2nd, aged 47 years." The child's coffin was also of polished elm with silver plated mountings. The inscription was "**Charles GAWN**, aged 4 years."

The husband of Mrs. GAWN and his family, with a number of relations and old friends, were the chief mourners. Mr. TERRY, chief examining officer of Customs at Portsmouth, and Mr. MACKAY, messenger from Portsmouth, as well as the Customs staff at Ryde, attended.

The Vicar (the Rev. A. KINGSTON) officiated, the service being choral. Many of the congregation were moved to tears by the sad ceremony. There were some 53 wreaths, including those from the following: the husband and children ("Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," "Safe into the haven guide, Oh receive my soul at last"); Dad, brothers, and sisters; Aunt Jane and family; Uncle George, Aunt Jane, and family; Aunt Ellen and Polly; Aunt Ellen; Cousin Sidney, Ernest, Ada, and Kate; Cousin A.G., Mrs. E. GAWN, and family; from Charlie's grandfather; Staff at the Ryde Customs'-station; Collector and staff of Customs; Ryde Pier-head staff; Collector and staff of Customs at Portsmouth; Edie and Lillie; Johnnie and Charlie; Mr. and Mrs. BEADING and Miss JACKSON; Widow DUNNING and family; Mr. and Mrs. James PERKINS and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph PERKINS; Mr. and Mrs. SIVELL and family; Mr. and Mrs. W. NEWNHAM; Mr. and Mrs. CHESSELL and Mr. and Mrs. DAY; Gertie; Alice, Elsie, and Annie; Mrs. CARR-TATE; Mrs. Alfred DRAYSON; Mr. G.H. GALLIENNE and family; Mr. and Mrs. LACEY; Mr. and Miss SPRAGG; Charlie BANNISTER; Mr. and Mrs. RANN; Mr. and Mrs. A. TUTTE; Mr. and Mrs. GREGORY; W.B. and E. OSMOND; Mr. and Mrs. GRIST; E.T.; Mrs. S. Vere ALSTON; Mr. and Mrs. PLUMBLEY; Mr. and Mrs. WARREN; Sidney TOOGOOD; Miss OSMOND; Miss YOLLAND; Mr. and Mrs. MACDONALD; Miss MORANT.

The funeral arrangements were excellently carried out by Mr. J.H. PERKIS.

Census & birth researched by Ann Barrett

Inquest & funeral kindly submitted by Janet Griffin