

1891 CENSUS: RG12/891. Folio 121. Page 36.
Address: Rose Cottage, Bettsworth-road, Ryde, IW.

James VESSEY. Head. M. 41. Carter. Ryde, IW.

Janet VESSEY. Wife. M. 40. Shorwell, IW.

Ernest VESSEY. Son. S. 16. General Labourer. Ryde, IW.

Albert VESSEY. Son. 14. Agricultural Labourer. Ryde, IW.

Mabel VESSEY. Dau. 12. Scholar. Ryde, IW.

Raymond VESSEY. Son. 10. Scholar. Ryde, IW.

Lawrence VESSEY. Son. 8. Scholar. Ryde, IW.

Stanley VESSEY. Son. 4. Scholar. Ryde, IW.

Bertie VESSIE. Son. 2. Ryde, IW.

ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Saturday 06 August 1898

Death Notice:-

VESEY.---On the 1st August 1898, at Ryde, **Ernest VESEY**, aged 23 years.

ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Saturday 06 August 1898, page 5

SAD CASE OF DROWNING

An inquest was held at the Gem Inn, Hill Street, by the Coroner, Mr E. F. BLAKE, on Tuesday last, on the body of **Ernest James VESEY**, of Bettsworth Road, who was drowned at Ryde under the circumstances detailed below. Mr WHITTLE was chosen foreman of the jury, and the body, which was at the Mortuary, having been viewed, the first witness called was

James VESEY, the father of deceased, who deposed that he lived at Bettsworth Road, Ryde. The deceased was 23 years of age, and worked in Messrs Randall's mineral water manufactory. Deceased lived with witness, and came home to dinner between 12 and 1 on Bank Holiday. He said that he was going to the Foresters' Fête. That was the last time that witness saw him. Heard that morning, between 9 and 10, that witness had been found drowned. Deceased had never shown any signs of insanity, and had no worry, as far as he knew. He was a sober man, and he never knew him the worse for drink.

Thomas Merson LOVEGROVE stated that he lived at Park Road, Ryde, and was a postal clerk. He was on the Pier with his wife on Bank Holiday, and saw the deceased, whom he knew by sight, sitting asleep on a seat on the left hand side of the Pier, about 130 yards from the Pier Gates. Did not see anything peculiar about him, but merely thought he was tired. That was about 9 30. Went to the bottom of the Pier, and on coming up again he saw several people looking over the Pier on the opposite side to which defendant had been sitting. Was told by one of the young men "There is a young man gone over." Witness asked "Did you see him go?" The young man replied that he saw him over the rails. He was hanging over the rail, and presently he let go and fell.

By a juror. —It was about 16 paces from the signal post at the shore end of the Pier.

Thomas BURNAM, a Coastguard, deposed that he did not see anything of the deceased alive. On that morning, about 5.30, he heard that a man had fallen over, and went in search of him. He discovered deceased at about 5.45, 100 yards west of the Pier, and 150 yards from the shore. He was lying face downwards on the sand quite dead.

In answer to a juror witness should think deceased was about 5ft. 7in. in height, and that the marks on deceased's eyes were caused by crabs.

Alfred WOODWARD, surgeon, practising at Ryde, deposed that he was called to see deceased that morning. After examining him he found that the deceased did not die from drowning. The Coroner. —What did he die of then?—I found that he had had a severe blow on the forehead before he had fallen into the water. A person might have a severe blow of which there would be no evidence until he had been in the water some time. He had a severe blow over his eye.

The Coroner.---Then do you think the man was dead before he fell into the water. —I think he was stunned.

But supposing he was stunned by a blow and then fell into the water and remained there what would be the result? — He would die.

Of course he would, but what would death be due to? — Suffocation.

In other words he would be drowned?— Yes.

A Juror asked if the deceased could have over-balanced himself and fallen over the rails?

The Coroner said he did not see how that could happen. One of the witnesses had said that deceased was hanging on to the rails by his hands, and that finally he had let go his hold and dropped into the water.

A Juror (Mr MARTIN) asked that Mr LOVEGROVE be re-called.

Mr LOVEGROVE, in answer to ex-PS. MARTIN, said that deceased was sitting opposite to the Electric Railway when he first saw him, but that, on his return, he found he had gone overboard between the Promenade Pier and the Electric Railway. The young man he questioned was a very tall young man apparently a draper's assistant. He seemed very excited and nervous. Witness said "What is the matter here?" and the young man said "someone has just fallen over." Witness said "What do you mean by 'just fallen'? Do you mean minutes or seconds ago?" The young man answered two or three minutes ago." Witness did not know whether anything was done to save the deceased. He went home, and as he passed the Pier Gates he asked the man in charge if he was aware of what had happened and he stated that he was.

The Coroner.—Did the young man give you his name? — No, the young man said "I expect he is drowned by this time," and witness leaned over as far as he could to see if he could see the deceased, and when he turned round the young man was gone.

The Coroner said there were only two verdicts, as far as he could see, that they could consider. One was (and that was what he should think the best they could return) that the evidence was not strong enough to say how deceased died, or whether it was accidental or otherwise. The other was that it was suicide. According to the young man who spoke to the witness, Mr LOVEGROVE, he saw the deceased hanging on the outside of the rails, and it would appear that he had gone over intentionally, because it would be absolutely impossible for anyone who had fallen over to assume that position. That was a very awkward fact, and it rested with them whether they thought the unfortunate young man did it on purpose. He ought perhaps to tell them that there was a letter found on deceased from a young woman who regretted that he was not able to go to see her on this holiday and that she could not afford to come to see him, but she hoped they would be able to meet at Christmas. There was nothing in the letter that would cause the deceased worry. It was a most awkward circumstance that the young man saw him hanging on to the rails by his hands. Perhaps he got over for some purpose and held on by his hands for a minute and then dropped over. If, however, they did not think the evidence was perfectly clear they could return a verdict that there was not sufficient evidence to show whether the death was intentional or otherwise.

The Jury accordingly returned an open verdict.

SYMPATHY OF BROTHER FORESTERS

At a meeting of the Foresters' Fête Committee, at the Foresters' Hall, Warwick Street, on Wednesday, a vote of condolence was passed with the relatives of Br. VESEY. The deceased was junior beadle of "Court Astraea" and was lap scorer at the Foresters' Sports on Bank Holiday afternoon. The funeral will take place on Saturday afternoon, and the fête committee have subscribed to a handsome floral tribute.
