

RYDE CENTENARIAN'S DEATH

MRS. SARAH WOODFORD, AGED 102

Mrs. Sarah WOODFORD, believed to be the oldest inhabitant of the Island, died at her home, 44 Arthur Street, Ryde, on Boxing Day. She had celebrated her 102nd birthday on September 11th. Despite her great age, Mrs. WOODFORD had been a widow for only seven years, and her husband's death terminated a marriage partnership lasting 69 years. Her husband, Mr. Frank WOODFORD, a cabinet maker and undertaker was 93 when he died. Mrs. WOODFORD had since been living with her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. A.W. NEWNHAM and her daughter, Miss Nellie WOODFORD.

The last surviving daughter of the late Mr. Isaac GALLOP, Mrs. WOODFORD was born at Cowes in 1853. Her father was employed as a tailor by Messrs. MORGAN and Sons before moving to Ryde and setting up as a master tailor in West Street. Her marriage took place at the old Wesleyan Chapel in Nelson Street, Ryde, when she was 27, and she had lived ever since in Arthur Street, and for the most part in No. 44. Both she and her husband were devoted members of the Primitive Methodist Church, now the Ryde Youth Centre. Her whole life was devoted to her family and her garden, which she tended until she was 90. Although she became deaf a few years ago, her eyesight was unimpaired, and she was able to read. When a bomb fell near her home during the war she was blown out of bed, but in her night attire went downstairs to inquire whether other members of her family were safe. She would recall with amusement how she used to stand in a cupboard during the air raids. Even until quite recently she was in the habit of taking a bath every morning without help. Until she became increasingly frail she was up every day shortly after 9 a.m., and although she was in the habit of retiring at 8 p.m., she never thought of going to sleep until she was assured that the rest of the household were at home and the doors locked.

One of her earliest memories was of being lifted on to her father's shoulder to see Cowes fireworks, and she had vivid recollections of QUEEN VICTORIA, through whose reign she had lived for almost 50 years. She also remembered when the site of the Ryde Parish Church was a field.

The funeral service took place yesterday at the Methodist Church.

Researched & typed by
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