

MR. THOMAS JAMES PRAGNELL

Sudden Death of Ex-Naval Man.-The death occurred with painful suddenness on Saturday of Mr. Thomas James PRAGNELL, of Arethusa Cottage, Rosemary-Lane, Swanmore. The deceased, who was 77 years of age, was walking in High-street when he collapsed near the junction with John-street. He was taken into Mr. MANSBRIDGE's shop nearby, but passed away within a few minutes, death due to heart trouble.

Mr. PRAGNELL, who was a native of Haylands, had had a long career in the senior service, and held responsible positions. He joined the Royal Navy as a boy in 1876. During the war in 1879 he landed in Zululand with the Royal Naval Brigade from *H.M.S. Bodicea*. In 1888 he joined the Coastguards, and was first stationed at Foreland, Bembridge, and subsequently at Bognor Regis, Cowes, Hayling Island, ultimately at Warsash, where in 1911 he was promoted to chief officer. He was then transferred to Burton Port, Northern Ireland, and became divisional officer superintending the northern command. He was due to retire two days before the outbreak of the Great War, but was recalled to the Navy and appointed captain of *H.M. trawler Tokio*, with which duties he combined those of examination officer. He was stationed at Scarpa Flow, and had the distinction of sighting the first and only German submarine that attempted to enter where the British fleet lay at anchor. As a result the submarine was destroyed, and in recognition he received the thanks of the admiralty, who warmly commended him and granted £100 for distribution among the *Tokio*'s crew. In their letter the Admiralty stated that in carrying out his duty he had prevented *H.M.S. Magnificent* from being attacked. A few days later he received the personal commendation of Admiral of the Feet the Earl JELLICOE.

Mr. PRAGNELL's four sons served in the Navy throughout the war, the eldest, Harry losing his life in *H.M.S. Queen Mary* at the Battle of Jutland.

In 1919 he retired and came to live at Arethusa Cottage, formerly the home of another ex-naval man, a Mr. RICKARD, who gained the V.C. whilst serving on *H.M.S. Arethusa* in the Crimean war. The deceased was keenly interested in gardening. He was a member of the Lion Lodge, R.A.O.B., and was a regular attendant at the St. James's men's services. He is survived by his second wife, three sons and four daughters.

The funeral was at St. Michael's Church on Wednesday, the Rev. A. C. DURHAM officiating. The hymn "Holy Father cheer our way," was sung. The mourners were Mrs. PRAGNELL (widow), Messrs. T. and H. PRAGNELL (sons), Mrs. HARWOOD, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mrs. MILES (daughters), Mrs H. PRAGNELL (daughter-in-law), Mr. R. HARWOOD, Mr. A. MILES (sons-in-law), Mr. T MILES, and Mr. R. LIPSCOMBE. The interment was at Ryde Cemetery beside his wife. There were some 30 floral tributes, including those from the Lion Lodge, R.A.O.B.; St. James's men's service; and the Ventnor Steam Laundry. Mr. Fred PRAGNELL (son), who is in China, and Mrs. BURNS (daughter), who is in Ireland were unable to attend.
