

**PATIENT, 74, DIED AFTER
WANDERING IN THE COLD**

A 74-year old spinster who left her ward at Whitecroft Hospital, Newport, and wandered into the grounds, spending about one and-a-half hours in the cold without a coat, later died of bronchial pneumonia, an Island inquest heard.

Mr. J. F. K. CHESTERTON, Island coroner, recorded a verdict of death by natural causes on Miss Kathleen Ena SKIDMORE, an in-patient since 1955, who died on January 5.

Mrs. Diane MATTHEWS a staff nurse who was on ward duty at the time, said she had noticed Miss SKIDMORE missing and a search had revealed that she had wandered outside.

Another staff nurse, Mrs. Susan MAY, said she had noticed her to be "very shaky" and although at first she seemed to respond to treatment she had died on January 5 nearly two days after wandering off.

SATISFIED

Dr. P. D. SWINSTEAD, pathologist, said the cause of death had been bronchial pneumonia but that Miss SKIDMORE had been suffering from a chest infection prior to wandering off. He could not say if the exposure to cold had contributed to her death.

Dr. H. M. MCBRYDE, consultant psychiatrist, said Miss SKIDMORE appeared to be "Mildly" uncertain of things at times. She may have been muddled by time, going out of bed and walked in the direction of where she normally had breakfast.

The Coroner said he was satisfied that staff had taken all reasonable care.

Nursing and other care she received were in no way susceptible to criticism. It must have been fairly cold and she was not wearing protective clothing when she walked out.
