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ROAD WORKER'S SUDDEN DEATH.

"TAR" COMPOSITION DISCUSSED AT RYDE INQUEST.

An inquest on the body of **Alfred Frank CASS**, 53, a labourer, employed by the Ryde Corporation, who died suddenly last week after having been engaged in road-tarring work, was conducted on Saturday by the Deputy Coroner (F. A. JOYCE, Esq.). – Mr. H. R. PALMER watched the proceedings on behalf of the relatives.

The widow, Mrs. Emily CASS, of 1 Mildred-cottages, Daniel-street, Ryde, said her husband had been employed by the Corporation for some years, mainly on road work. He had been engaged on and off on tar spraying. He had always enjoyed good health, but on Friday May 16, when he came home to dinner, he complained that the tar had made him feel sick, and he went to bed for the rest of the day. He returned to work next day as usual, and continued until the following Wednesday, when, at midday, he again complained of the tar. The same evening he was brought home in a Corporation cart, and went to bed. Mrs. CASS wished to send for a doctor, but her husband said it was only the tar that had made him bilious. She gave him some tea and brandy, but he vomited during the night. Very early on Thursday morning he arose and crouched by the bed. Witness spoke to him, but he did not reply. She lifted him on to the bed, but he gave no further sign of life.

Robert RASHLEY, another labourer who had been working with the deceased in Monkton-street, said he complained of the tar for the first time on Friday.

The Foreman, Mr. Ernest DIBBENS, said the composition they were using on the roads was not tar, but a by-product of paraffin called "Mexphalt." They had been using it for about a month, and there had been no other complaints. On the Wednesday, when the deceased felt sick, witness gave him half a teaspoonful of bi-carbonate of soda. He understood that CASS had been ruptured for some time, and had complained of the pain. - Recalled and questioned by Mr. PALMER as to whether he noticed anything peculiar about the deceased man's colour when he saw him on the Wednesday, witness said his eyes were dark and staring, and his lips and forehead went very white at intervals.

Dr. J. W. PRIDMORE said the deceased man had been on his panel list for many years, but he had never attended him. He was called in on Thursday, shortly after CASS had died, and conducted a post-mortem examination the same day. On examining the stomach he found a twisted gut that would certainly cause food to be thrown up and would affect the heart. The heart was normal. There was also a large hernia, of long standing, on the left side. He attributed death to syncope. – Questioned by Mr. PALMER, the Doctor advanced various explanations as to how the gut could have become twisted. It was not at all a common thing, but he did not believe it would be brought about by an accident.

Mr. PALMER : Was there any suggestion of poisoning? Anything in the body to show that the deceased may have been poisoned? – No, neither in the stomach nor lungs.

Mr. PALMER : Did you examine the body from a "Bernard Spilsbury" point of view? – No : I thought there was quite sufficient in the twisted gut to show the cause of death.

Evidence was also given by the Borough Surveyor (Mr. B. F. HOLNESS), who, in answer to Mr. PALMER, said the composition used on the roads was really a form of benxine. He had had considerable experience in its use, and would not say it was poisonous.

Returning a verdict that death was due to syncope arising from volvulus of the small intestines, the Coroner remarked that he was quite satisfied with the Doctor's statement. He had given sufficient evidence to show the cause of death without entering into the question of poisoning.

The remains of Mr. A. CASS were interred at the Cemetery on Monday. A service was conducted at Holy Trinity Church by the Vicar (the Rev. N. H. STUBBS). In addition to the mourners, the Borough Surveyor (Mr. B. F. HOLNESS), the Town Foreman (Mr. A. WHEELER), the Water Inspector (Mr. A. BRADING), a number of the deceased's workmates, and many prominent members of Court Astrma, A.O.F., paid a last tribute of respect. The Foresters' service was read at the graveside by Bro. A. J. NASH, C.R.

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