

William Ernest Deacon

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NEWPORT.

Newport Man's Suicide.

An inquest was held at the Legh Richmond-hall, Newport, on Monday, by Dr. H. Y. Mansfield (acting deputy coroner) on the body of William Ernest Deacon, aged 52, who was found dead in his bed-room at 10 Chapel-street, Newport on Saturday. Dr. Mansfield sat without a jury and Inspector Randall and P.C. Steer represented the police. Mr. G. F. S. Stratton watched the proceedings on behalf of an interested party.

Mrs. Laura Frances Deacon gave evidence of identification and said that when she left home to go to work at 7.50 a.m. on Saturday her husband was reading the County Press apparently in his usual health. When she returned at about 9.45 a.m. she noticed that his breakfast was untouched, but thought little of it. As he had not returned by the time she had finished cooking the dinner, at about 1.45, she went to his room thinking he might have gone back to bed, and found him lying apparently dead across the bed with his head towards the foot, and sent for Dr. Jones. She had never heard him threaten to take his life. - The Coroner: Was he a man of violent temper? - Witness: Yes, I am sorry to say he was. - Witness added that she was not on speaking terms with her husband as a result of trouble between them a day or so before.

P.C. Steer described how he found the body lying on the bed. The left arm was hanging over the side towards the spot where the nearly empty nicotine bottle (produced) was found. He searched the room, but found no written or other message. He afterwards found that an ounce of nicotine had been purchased from a local chemist on October 4th by a man answering to the description of the deceased, who signed the poison register in the name of E. W. Deacon and gave the address 10 Chapel-street, Newport. He stated that he wanted it for use in a green-house, but witness ascertained that deceased had no green-house and had no dealings with green-houses.

Dr. J. H. Jones, of Newport, ascribed death to nicotine poisoning and said that deceased had been dead for several hours. That poison would have a quick action, particularly as deceased had presumably consumed nearly an ounce.

Dr. Mansfield found that Deacon committed suicide by drinking nicotine and that he was of unsound mind at the time.

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