

## **Harry William Minns**

**Isle of Wight County Press - 23 Feb 1957**

### **BUSINESS EXECUTIVE AND SPORTSMAN**

#### **DEATH OF MR. HARRY MINNS**

#### **OF NEWPORT**

“He was a great sport” That tribute came spontaneously to the lips of many of his friends throughout the Island when they heard of the death on Sunday of Mr. Harry William Minns aged 75, of Durlston, Mount Pleasant, Newport, following a seizure the previous day. From his youth until the end of his life Harry Minns had been a prominent and much-respected figure in two branches of Island sport - in his early days as a racing cyclist who won many track successes locally and on the mainland, and in later life as an enthusiastic devotee and organiser of coursing. In business he was almost equally well-known for his connection throughout his working life with the family firm of dyers and cleaners, Messrs. Bright and Minns, of Nodehill, Newport, of which he had been a director for many years in succession to his late Captain William Minns. He was educated at the former Portland House Academy and except for six months in London, training with another firm, he had been an active worker in the family concern with his fellow directors, Mr. W. L. Bright and Mr. Walter Minns (his brother).

#### **CYCLING CHAMPION**

Mr. Minns started his career as a racing cycling at the early age of 16, when he won second place in the I.W. Cycling Club's five mile championship at The Oval, East Cowes. Later he won the five-mile championship of the Vectis CC when races were held around the canoe lake at Ryde, tided with the late A. M. Cheverton in another I.W. cycling club five-mile championship on the County Ground Shanklin, and then went on to his most outstanding achievement winning the mile championship of the Southampton Centre of the N.C.U. at Poole, which carried with it the championship of Hants, Wilts, Dorset and the Channel Islands. His calibre as a racing cyclist is, perhaps, even better indicated by the fact that in one season, in 26 races from virtual scratch, he won 11 first, two second and three third prizes. He was for a number of years hon. secretary of the I.W. Cycling Club, and continued to ride a bicycle to and from his work until recently.

#### **COURSING ORGANISER**

When his cycle racing days were over Mr. Minns switched his sporting activities to coursing, running his own greyhounds at local meetings for a time, and then rendering splendid service to the sport in the Island for 27 years as the hon. secretary of the I.W. County Coursing Club. In his capacity he followed the late Mr. W. H. Wadham, of Carisbrooke, and with great enthusiasm and ability maintained the club's high reputation by the admirable manner in which he organised both club and open meetings. His unfailing good nature and willingness to give a helping hand to anyone won him the friendship of the farmers and largely contributed to the club's popularity and success. Mr Minns was also a keen whist player. In the days of the Newport Whist League he acted as hon. secretary of the Wheatsheaf Hotel team, known as the Nondescripts.

He married, in 1902, Miss Elizabeth Reynolds, a daughter of the late Mr. William Reynolds a Newport butcher and farmer at Palmer's Brook. She survived him with three sons and two daughters.

## THE FUNERAL

Many former business colleagues and sporting friends were among the large congregation at the funeral service which took place at St. Thomas's Church, Newport, on Thursday. The Vicar (the Rev. C. R. Farnsworth, R.D.) included the hymns "Lead Kindly Light" and "Abide with Me," accompanied by Miss Lower (organist).

The chief mourners were Messrs. G. W., H. B. and A. R. Minns (sons), Mesdames Baillieu and Cooper (daughters), Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Minns (brother and sister-in-law), Mr. R. H. B. Minns (grandson), Mesdames H. R. and A. R. Minns (daughters-in-law), Mr. H. Cooper (son-in-law), Mrs. S. Clifton (niece), Miss M. Reynolds (sister-in-law), and Mr. W. L. Bright.

The firm of Bright and Minns were represented by Mr. W. M. S. Frank (director) and the staff of all the Island branches. Among members of the I. W. Coursing Club present were Ald. Lt-Col. F. J. T. Mew, T.D. (president), Mr. H. Morris (chairman), Mr. W. Drudge (field master) and Mr and Mrs. C. H. Gustar (hon. secretary and hon. treasurer). Other firms and organisations represented included Messrs. W. Hurst and Son, Upward and Rich, Wray and Sons, H. Scott and Sons, E. E. Shepherd, F. P. Spencer and Sons, Brickwoods, Frank Cheverton, H. Biles, and the Newport Conservative Club. The interment was at Carisbrooke Cemetery. Among the floral tributes were those from the staff of Messrs. Bright and Minns Ltd., The I.W. County Coursing Club, and many from his coursing and other friends. Messrs. Moorman and Son made the arrangements.

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