

Doreen Packham

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DEATH OF A BELOVED HEADMISTRESS

MISS D. PACKHAM, OF NEWPORT

Miss Doreen Packham, of Moorlands, North Fairlee Road, Newport, first headmistress of Nine Acres County Infants' School, Newport, died on Easter Day at St. Mary's Hospital, Newport aged 48. Many tributes have been paid to the devoted service she gave in her chosen career. Mr. A.L. Hutchinson (county education officer) said this week, "She was much respected and held in great affection and regard and played a leading part in the general development of infant training in the Island."

Miss Packham taught in Leicester before moving to Hendon, where she gained experience in various infants' schools between 1938 and 1949. She was appointed headmistress of the Nodehill Infants' School in November, 1949, and when the new school was built at Nine Acres in 1951 was appointed the first headmistress. She played a full part in her professional life in the Head Teachers' Association and was always most anxious to increase her knowledge by attending courses.

She had two hobbies - folk dancing and sailing. She was secretary of the Island branch of the English Folk Song and Dance Society and did much to keep folk dancing alive in the Island. She was a popular member of the Island Sailing Club and owned a Scow, taking part in many races for dinghy enthusiasts.

Her parents came to live in the Island when she was appointed to her headship. Her mother died last year and her father is at present in a nursing home at Carisbrooke.

The esteem in which Miss Packham was held was shown by the large attendance at the funeral service at St. John's Church, Newport, on Wednesday when the vicar (the Rev. S.F. Cooper) spoke of her untiring devotion to her profession. Her life was centred in her school, where she was known for her friendliness, gentleness and cheerfulness. Her death had been referred to as a tragedy but her memory would live on in the lives of hundreds of children who had been in her care.

The service included Psalm 23 (Crimond) and the hymns "Let Saints on earth" and "Jesus lives." Mr. H.B.J. Lower was the organist.

The family mourners were Mr. C.A. Packham (father), Miss D. Brown (cousin), Miss J. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. A. Hutchinson, Mr. and Mrs. F. Chiverton, Miss D. Arnold, Mrs. M. Muff, Mrs. Petrie, Mr. L. Symmans and Mrs. R. Merwood.

The congregation included the Mayor of Newport (Ald. E.W.G. Hands), Mrs. M. Christy (vice-chairman, Education Committee), managers of Nine Acres County

Infants' School, the I.W. Head Teachers' Association, Nine Acres Parent-Teacher Association, County Teachers' Association, Retired Teachers' Association, staff of Nine Acres School, Island branches of Toc H, English Folk Song and Dance Society, Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club, the Ladies and Society Committee of the Corinthian Yacht Club, Workers' Educational Association, School Dental Officers' Association; Carisbrooke Grammar School, Newport C.E. Junior Boys' School, Parkhurst County Junior and Parkhurst Infants' School, Priory Secondary Boys' School, Gatten and Lake County School, Newport Priory Secondary Girls' School, Love Lane (Cowes), All Saints (Freshwater); the county education department, Newport Repertory Club, Messrs. F.E. Whitcher Ltd., Ventnor Folk Dancing Society, the Church Army, Pyle Street Methodist Church, Cowes Division Solent Scow Class, and Newport C.E. School Parent-Teacher Association.

Interment was at Newport cemetery. The floral tributes included those from all societies represented. Messrs. R.G.W. Reed made the arrangements.

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