

## **Arthur James Wood**

**Isle of Wight County Press – 28 June 1952**

### **WELL-KNOWN NEWPORT BUSINESS MAN**

#### **DEATH OF MR. ARTHUR J. WOOD**

After an illness lasting about a year, one of Newport's best known and most respected business men, Mr. Arthur James Wood, of Oakleigh, St. John's Road, died at Shanklin Cottage Hospital on Saturday, aged 65. To a wide circle of friends and business associates the growth of the well known ironmongery firm in Pyle Street – of which company he was the chairman of directors – from the smithy which stood on the spot almost 200 years ago, is well known. The business was developed from a workshop which a Mr. Wilkins created on the site of a smithy. The next owner was a Mr. John Russell, and it was in 1867 that it came into the hands of Messrs. J. & J.H. Wood, the former being the grandfather of the present owners. Trading went on for a time as Messrs. J. and H. J. Wood, and from 1891 as Messrs. Wood and Horspool. It was about that time that the firm was appointed Royal Warrant ironmongers to Queen Victoria. Next the business became known as Messrs. Wood and Tame, and Mr. Arthur Wood, the father of the present owners, then became sole owner. On his death in 1933 the business became incorporated with four directors – all members of the family, Mr. Arthur Wood being the chairman.

He was educated at the Newport Grammar School and Farnham Grammar School, and then went to Croydon for a five years' apprenticeship as an ironmonger, joining his father's business in 1909. In his youth Mr. Wood was well known for his athletic prowess as a member of the Newport Rowing Club and as a long distance swimmer. Once he swam from Newport to Cowes, and on another occasion, accompanied in a boat by Mr. Henry Castle, son of the late Dr. Hutton Castle, he commenced a sea-bathing session by swimming across the Solent. His prowess in swimming stood him in good stead when he was on his way to France with the Island Yeomanry in the 1914-18 war. The vessel on which they were crossing was holed and had to be beached. Down below in a flooded compartment, a man was trapped by his arm. Mr. Wood dived in and, because of his ability to swim under water for some time, was able to effect a rescue. Walking, and a love of country life were his main hobbies. Some years ago he was a member of the recently revived Coursing Club. He was a member of the Island Sailing Club, the I.W. County Club, and Newport Conservative Club and was president of the Isle of Wight Ironmongers' Assistants' Association. He leaves a widow and one daughter, Miss Jillian Mary Wood, with whom much sympathy is felt.

#### **THE FUNERAL**

There was a large attendance at the funeral service at St. Thomas's Church on Wednesday, when about 300 friends and business associates, who filled the nave, gathered to pay their last respects. The Vicar (the Rev. C. R. Farnsworth), who officiated, paid tribute to the sportsmanship and friendliness of Mr. Wood, who had always been ready to encourage those who sought his aid, and to his fine courage during his painful illness.

*1904 Kelly's Newport street directory shows 'Arthur Wood, ironmonger at 114 Pyle Street' – 2019 Newport Age Concern.*

*Transcription and research by Tony Barton for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries © 2019*

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