



# The Western Gazette

1900-1974

**1901 Ecclesiastical Appointment**

The Rev R Usher, who for the past seven years has been vicar of East Lulworth will, in the course of the next fortnight, be leaving for West Knoyle, Wilts, to which living he has been presented by the Earl of Pembroke.  
Western Gazette Friday 22 February 1901

**1905 A Village Tragedy**

The South Wilts Coroner (Mr R A Wilson) held an inquest at West Knoyle on Saturday, on the body of Arthur Isaac Bealing, farm labourer, of the village, who was found hanging by the neck in an outhouse, on Thursday.

The widow stated that her husband had been ill since Christmas, having only done seven day's work since that time. He had complained of suffering pains in his head which she believed were traceable to a fall he had some years ago. He had been attended by a doctor, and a week previously his finger was amputated below the first joint. She had never heard him threaten to take his life, but she had heard him say that the pains in his head would drive him mad. He was very bad on Tuesday and gave her so much trouble that she had to ask a neighbour, a Mr Austin, to call on the doctor at Mere, and tell him she thought her husband had got worse in the head.

John Wiles, a labourer of West Knoyle, stated that on Thursday he was at work in his garden at about seven o'clock when the last witness asked him to go and see her husband who was very strange in his head and said he was going to do away with himself. Witness went to the house and called deceased's name, but he received no answer, and on going to the outhouse he saw him hanging by the neck on a chain, which was attached to a staple. The deceased's feet were only a little way off the ground.

Witness held the body up until the chain was removed from the staple, but Bealing appeared to be quite dead, although the body was warm, and perspiration stood out on the face. The witness added that he had known deceased for some years and he had always been strange. The jury returned a verdict of suicide whilst temporarily insane.

Western Gazette April 21 1905

**1908 Inquest**

Mr R A Wilson, County Coroner, held an inquest at West Knoyle on Monday on the body of William Spudy, who died on the previous Saturday. William Baker, of 30, West Street, Warminster, labourer, said the deceased was a well-sinker, and lived on Warminster Common. Witness went with the deceased on Saturday morning to the Down Well on the Manor Farm, at West Knoyle, occupied by Mr Ricketts.

They had been engaged by Mr Titt, of Warminster, to repair the pump at the well, and at nine o'clock deceased went down by the geared windlass. When he got to the water he found that the pumps were submerged, and could not proceed with the work. He communicated with witness, who drew him up, and he said he must report the matter to Mr Ricketts. Before doing so he asked witness to attach the horse to the gearing to see if the pump was in working order, and it was found to work all right.

After they returned to the well deceased said he would go down and see how far the pumps were under the water, and got into the seat to descend. Witness turned the handle three or four rounds, when the windlass got out of gear, and deceased fell immediately to the bottom. As he got into the seat, in witness's opinion, he must have knocked the dog clutch with his hand or the sleeve of his coat. He was not in the habit of tying himself to the seat.

Allen Ford, plumber, of Mere, said he was sent for to go down the well and recover a body. The well was 168 feet in depth and contained about thirty feet of water. He took grappling irons with him and he brought the body to the surface after three hours search. He attributed the accident to the same cause as the last witness.

Dr W W Farnfield, of Mere, who was present when the body was brought to the surface, said the scalp was torn from the skull, which was extensively fractured. This would have been sufficient to cause death, apart from immersion. The jury returned a verdict of Accidental Death.

Western Gazette June 19 1908

**1920 Dog Licence**

The Rev G W Griffiths of West Knoyle, charged with keeping a dog without a license and was ordered to pay 7s 6d  
Western Gazette Friday 14 May 1920

**School Attendance**

Albert Mead, of West Knoyle, who was represented by his wife, was summoned for failing to send his children to school regularly, and was fined 5s  
Western Gazette Friday 14 May 1920

**1943 Died of Wounds**

Mr and Mrs T Pugsley, West Knoyle, have received an official notification from the War Office that their eldest son, Pte Bob Pugsley, of the Dorset Regiment, died of wounds in July. Pte Pugsley was 30 years of age and had been with the Dorsets for nine years, serving in Palestine, India and Malta. He was in Malta for 3½ years and experienced the heavy air raids on that island. He received his wounds at Sicily.

About two months ago Mr and Mrs Pugsley received information that their second son, Cpl Walter John Pugsley, had died of wounds, but this was incorrect as he was only wounded and is now well and home on leave. The two brothers had been serving together, both being wounded in the same battle in July.

Western Gazette Friday 22 October 1943

**Women's Institute**

At the annual meeting, the following committee and officers were elected: Miss Clavey (president), Mrs Cotton (treasurer), Mrs Cross, Mrs Glaisyer, Mrs Langton (secretary), Mrs P Lander (vice-president), Mrs F Mead, Mrs B Riddick, Mrs Warner, Mrs Wilson.

The Christmas party, on Wednesday last week drew many members and guests. The drama group gave two amusing sketches "The Hospice" (F Sladen-Smith), in which Miss Clavey, Mrs Cotton, Miss Halbeard, Mrs Langton, Mrs Mead, Mrs Riddick and Mrs Yeoman took part; and "In the Blackout" (Gertrude Jennings) in which the actors were Mrs Cotton, Mrs Langton, Mrs Mead and Mrs Yeoman. The work of stage manager, props and wardrobe-mistress and scene shifter, as well as the decorations of the room, was ably undertaken as usual by Mrs Langton, to whom a vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs Ashton Warner. Two Christmas cakes were given by Mrs A Warner and Mrs Emblin, while each member contributed six "somethings to eat". Those responsible for the tea are to be congratulated on their work under Miss D Clavey and Mrs B Riddick. Miss Yeoman presided at the piano lent by Mrs Cross, and community singing filled up the odd moments. Mrs Brain won the prize given by Mrs Glaisyer for the highest number of points gained in the year's competitions.

Western Gazette Friday 17 December 1943

**1948 Postmistress Retires**

Mrs H Riddick, who has retired after 47 years as postmistress at West Knoyle, has been presented with a cheque for £11 1s from the residents of the village in token of their appreciation of her long and courteous services. Mrs Riddick wishes to thank all subscribers for their kind thoughts.

Western Gazette Friday 17 December 1948

**1965 Couple Celebrate**

Golden wedding celebrations are not rare occasions in the lives of Mr & Mrs Albert Ford of Riverdale, Mere, for Mrs Ford's three brothers and Mr Ford's two sisters have all celebrated 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries within the last few years. But when the bells of St. Michael's rang out on Monday evening proclaiming yet another family golden wedding, it was for Mr & Mrs Ford's own golden wedding.

Mr Albert Morley Ford, formerly of Henstridge Somerset and his wife Dorothy (nee Riddick), a member of an old West Knoyle family, were married at West Knoyle Church by the Rev. G.W. Griffith on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1915. After the First World War in which Mr. Ford served with the North Somerset Yeomanry, they settled in West Knoyle where he farmed for 35 years, the greater part of the time at School House Farm. He regularly visited markets at Gillingham and Shaftesbury, hunted with the Somerset & West Wilts and served as Churchwarden for several years.

Some 14 years ago they retired to Mere where Mr. Ford has found opportunity for social service on the committee of the local branch of the British Legion, of which he was a founder member, and as a driver for the Hospital Car Service. He is also a playing member of the Bowling Club. Mr. And Mrs. Ford have no children but on Monday they were 'at home' to relatives and numerous friends.

Western Gazette Friday 30 April 1965

**1968 Church Stalwart at West Knoyle**

The flag on the tower of West Knoyle Parish Church was flown at half mast on Monday for the funeral of Mr. Arthur (Harry) Riddick, a former Churchwarden and the oldest inhabitant of the parish, who died on Thursday at the home of his son and daughter in law Mr. & Mrs. B. Riddick, the Post Office.

Born in West Knoyle, Mr. Riddick lived there all his life, working in farming and later as gardener to the Warner family at The Old Rectory. He served as Churchwarden for 29 years, was afterwards Verger and was a source of information about its history over the past 80 years. His wife died last August, nearly two years after they celebrated their diamond wedding. He leaves a son and a daughter. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. R. Preston Thomas (rector) who paid tribute to Mr. Riddick's life of service to the church and the community. Mrs. Cross played the organ.

Family and personal mourners were Mr. & Mrs. B. Riddick (son and daughter in law), Mr. & Mrs. H. Day (son in law and daughter), Mr. K. Riddick (grandson), and Mrs. A. Gumm (granddaughter), Mr. F. Mead and Mr. A. Ford (brothers in law), Mr. & Mrs. M. Carter, Mrs. F. Curtis (also Mrs. N. Ings), Mr. & Mrs. L. Harrison, Mrs. N. Curtis (also Mr. Curtis), Mrs. E. Bailey, Miss M. Littlecott, Mrs. G. Francis (also Mr. Francis), Mr. E.G. Riddick (also Miss D. Riddick), Mr. & Mrs. L.S. Burden, Mr. & Mrs. A. Riddick (also Mr. & Mrs. W. Riddick), Mrs. R. Littlecott (also Mr. Littlecott), Miss P. Riddick (also Mr. & Mrs. P. Riddick) and Mr. C. Riddick (nephews and nieces), Mrs. M. Bannell, Mrs. F. Bence and Mr. R. Bence (Trowbridge) and Mr. & Mrs. D. Whitney (also Mrs. Coombs). Mrs. A. Ford (sister), Mrs. D. Littlecott (sister in law) and Mr. A. Gumm (grandson) were unable to attend.

Friends present - Mrs. & Mrs. J.M. Longley (also the Rev. N.E.E. Johnson, former Rector of West Knoyle), Mr. & Mrs. P.E. Emblin, Miss J. Warner (former employer), Mr. & Mrs. S. Bain, Miss Gibson, Deaconess Gibson, Mrs. Wissam, Mr. A. Mead, Mr. H. Mead, Mr. A. Hutchings (also Mrs. Hutchings), Mrs. G. Cross (also Mr. Cross), Mr. & Mrs. E.A. Carter, Mrs. Crook also Mr. V. Mead, Mr. J. Wilson (also Mrs. Wilson), Mrs. Bendoraitis (also Mr. T. Bendoraitis), Mr. D. Pugsley (also Mesdames D. & F. Pugsley), Mr. & Mrs. C. Norris, Mr. V. Coombes, Mrs. G.M. Bennett, Mr. & Mrs. R.J. Morgan, Mr. G. Morgan, Mr. B. Penny, Mr. W. Broadway, Mr. & Mrs. W. Pugsley, Mr. & Mrs. L. Mills, Mr. & Mrs. G. Hannam, Mr. N. Beard, East Knoyle (also Mrs. Beard), Mr. & Mrs. J. Porch, Mrs. B. Lambert, Mr. R. Palmer, Mr. E.C. Allen, Mr. A.E. Chubb, Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. & Mrs. L. Mitchell, Mr. M. Mitchell, Mr. C. Mitchell, Mrs. R. Gumm, Mrs. P. Habgood (also Mr. Habgood) and other friends. The family wish to thank relatives and friends for kind expressions of sympathy and also for the many beautiful floral tributes.

Unknown publication January 1968

**1969 Funeral of Mrs P. Riddick**

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin, West Knoyle, was filled on Friday for the funeral service of Mrs. Mary Jane Riddick, wife of Mr. Phane Riddick of Castle Lane, Mere.

Mrs. Riddick, who was 84, was born in West Knoyle, was married there 58 years ago and lived in the village until the family moved to Mere in 1938. In both parishes, she was a regular worshipper at the Parish Church and a keen member of the Mothers' Union. Besides her husband, she leaves a son and a daughter. The service was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. R. Preston Thomas, who spoke of the family's long association with West Knoyle and of Mrs. Riddick's service to the church. Mrs. G. Cross was the organist.

The family mourners were Miss Phyllis Riddick (daughter), Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Riddick (son and daughter in law), Mr. A. Ford (brother in law), Mr. & Mrs. A. Riddick (also Mr. & Mrs. D. Gray and Mr. & Mrs. John Riddick), Mr. Gerald Riddick, Mr. & Mrs. B. Riddick, Mr. E. Riddick, Mr. Cyril Riddick (also Mr. & Mrs. Claud Riddick), Mr. & Mrs. G. Francis, Mrs. N. Curtis, Mrs. F. Curtis, Mrs. N. Ings (also Mr. Ings), Mr. & Mrs. D.T. Evans, Yeovil, Mrs. L. Harrison, Mr. H. Day (also Mr. Day), and Mr. & Mrs. M. Carter, nephews and nieces, Miss E. Coward, Mrs. A. Maund, Mrs. E. Simmons, Mr. & Mrs. C. King, Mr. & Mrs. W. Shadick, Mrs. Coles, Miss Coles, Mrs. Dredge, Miss Howell and Mr. & Mrs. H. Hardy (cousins).

Also present were Mr. & Mrs. H.J. Caddy and Mrs. Banfield, Mrs. Crook, Mr. V. Mead, Mr. & Mrs. P.E. Emblin, Mr. C.S. Day, Mrs. R. Stainer (also Mr. Stainer and Mr. & Mrs. J. Paul), Mr. & Mrs. W. Broadway, Mr. & Mrs. H. Eaton, Mr. & Mrs. A.E. Ford, Mr. & Mrs. D. Whitney, Mr. L.M. Mitchell, Mrs. M. Habgood, Mrs. D.M. George, Mrs. R.P. Thomas representing the Mother's Union, Mrs. Bolton, Miss Thorington, Miss Copsey, Miss D. Durbin, Miss M. Gething, Mrs. D. Bennett (also Mrs. C. Burden), Mrs. G. Cross (also Mr. Cross), Mr. & Mrs. C. Norris, Miss Hill, Miss K. James, Mr. S.F. James, Mr. P. Garrett, Mr. A. Mead and other friends. Mr. Phane Riddick (husband) and Mrs. A. Ford (sister in law) were unable to attend. The floral tributes included one from the Mothers' Union.

Unknown publication April 1969

**1974 Funeral of Mr P. Riddick**

The funeral service for Mr. Phineas Riddick of Castle Lane Mere took place on Thursday at West Knoyle Parish Church. Mr. Riddick, who was 90 years of age, died the previous Sunday at Sambourne Hospital, Warminster. A native of West Knoyle, he worked on farms there until moving in 1938 to Mere where he continued in agriculture until retirement. The funeral service was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. R. Preston Thomas, and Mr. Dudley Teague was the organist.

The family mourners were Miss P. Riddick (daughter), Mr. & Mrs. S. Riddick (son and daughter in-law), Mrs. M. Reynolds (granddaughter), Mr. P. Riddick (grandson), Mr. & Mrs. C. King (cousins), and Mrs. K. Curtis, Mrs. G. Harrison, Mrs. M. Riddick, Mr. G.R. Riddick, Mr. C. Riddick, Mrs. C. Day, Mr. & Mrs. B. Riddick, Mr. & Mrs. G. Francis, Mr. & Mrs. L. Francis and Mr. & Mrs. M. Carter (nephews and nieces). Mr. & Mrs. A. Ford (brother-in-law and sister) were unable to attend. The family wish to thank friends for kind expressions of sympathy and also for the beautiful flowers.

Unknown publication June 1974