

23rd March +
8th April 1914

PROCEEDINGS of INQUEST

held upon the body of

John Thomas Duncan

at

known as
James Little
Kang Tang &
Melbourne Morgue

Received at the Crown Law Offices,

9th April 1914.

P. Cohen. Coroner.

RECEIVED
9 APR 1914
C. L. O.

INQUISITION.

VICTORIA, }
TO WIT. }

AN INQUISITION for our Sovereign Lord King George V., taken at
Court House Lang Lang &
the Morgue, Melbourne, in the State of Victoria, the 23rd March & 8th
day of April A.D. 1914 in the Fourth
year of the reign of our said Lord the King, by me, Philip Cohen
~~Robert Hodgson~~
gentleman, a Coroner of our Lord the King for the said State, upon the view
of the body of ^{Thomas} John Duncan known as James Little
then and there lying dead.

Having inquired upon the part of Our Lord the King, when, where, how,
^{Thomas}
and by what means the said John Duncan known as James Little

(1) His or her,

came by¹ his death, I say that

on the 22nd day of March 1914

(2) Here state cause
of death, if known;
if unknown, doubt-
ful, or no evidence,
state the fact ac-
cordingly.

at² Koo wee rup
he died from the effects of a
gun shot wound self inflicted
while he was suffering from
the effects of intoxicating
liquor.

In witness whereof I, the aforesaid Coroner, have to this Inquisition

put my hand, this 8th day of April

A.D. 1914

Philip Owen

Coroner.

VICTORIA

VICTORIA



Mr. Johnson
Potatoe farmer

Moorecup

24 Somerset St.
Richmond

Dear sir

I am writing my
mother on behalf
of myself as I am
ill in bed. my
husband was
supposed to have
committed suicide
at Hoo ween in
the name of James
Little so I believe
my? I doctfield from
the Richmond
Police Station
informed me that
I could get the
depositions of

the request from
you. I am about
to claim the
body for burial
in Hellbourn
as I have a solicitor
on my behalf
employed by his
working mates
I should like to
know the particulars
of the case.

yours
respectful
Mrs John Duncan

27 Somerset St
Richmond

March 28

Dear sir

my husband John Duncan
has deserted me for some
time. I saw him last
Friday night. he said
he was going to
Norwechup Potatoes
digging and was going
to write to me in
the name of Mrs James Little
would you kindly
give me some particulars
of the man that
committed suicide
at Norwechup if he
is identical with
John Duncan

POOR
ORIGINAL

reply or telephone
to Richmond Police
He had a blanket
with red. brown.
and blue stripes in
it. but dont know
whether he took it
with him. as he had
it at his mothers
43 Browning st. south yam
I wrote to the man
where the suicide
took place in n^o
Little as I did not
like to state my
case to him and
have got no reply
Trusting you will
let me know as
soon as possible

POOR
ORIGINAL

he had been staying
with his mother
friday night. but
returned to Hoosweemup
saturday. I will give
you a few details
of him

he is 5.5 in height

clean shaved

dark eyes

black hair inclined to
be grey

has a girl tattooed on
his arm

some teeth missing

on the upper jaw

a scar under his eye

would you kindly

give me an early

POOR

ORIGINAL

I am yours
Auntie
Mrs John Duncan

Lucy Lang
28/3/14

Forward to Mr Cohen
for his information

118/14
P Cohen Esq & Co } W. Cole
Kelt } Mc 4115

BLIND THROUGH FROM
OTHER SIDE

Richmond
Post office

Dear sir
I read in todays paper
of a man named
James Little committing
suicide on your
premises. my
husbands name
is the same and
he went that way
for work. he was
in Melbourne
Friday night but
went back again
as he could not
find my address
he left word

POOR
ORIGINAL

with a friend when
 I called to see them
 to tell me. would
 you kindly tell
 me if he had been
 clean shaven
 but dark eyes and
 hair, he had a
 little girl tattooed
 on his arm and
 how long he
 had been there
 I believe he had
 new boots when
 in Melbourne
 Friday night. I expected
 a letter from him
 to my friend
 place today. so

POOR
 ORIGINAL

I am anxious
 would you kindly
 let me know
 as soon as possible
 yours anxious
 Mr Little
 Richmond
 Post office

POOR
 ORIGINAL

Rocky Mountain
Mrs Ryan

42 Broadway St

Oh Young

A

Oh Young
Oh Young
Oh Young

POOR
ORIGINAL

SCRIPT WRITTEN IN PENCIL

~~sublime~~ Birthday
may be ~~fore~~ ever
Happy and Bright!

To
I am not
going to write to
Grand

POOR
ORIGINAL

SCRIPT WRITTEN IN PENCIL

VERY FADED DOCUMENT

VICTORIA POLICE.-(47.)

Richmond Station Melbourne Police District

April 3rd 1914

To 2nd Division

REPORT of Const Noctovich

Relative to file herewith re James Little
otherwise John Duncan & statement of M^{rs} Duncan.
I have to report that I showed M^{rs} Duncan the attached letter which she stated she wrote by her. I also showed her the slips of paper which were found on deceased person. & she identified the writing "John Duncan" on the slip marked A as her husband's writing & the name M^{rs} Ryan as the name of deceased sister. She has no doubt that deceased is her husband. Duncan was here on the night of the 20-3-14 & I was called out & was informed he had a residence. & I was searching for him till after 12 O'clock. There are two warrants for his arrest, One for Larceny in a Dwelling & one for Stealing a Bicycle. He was a man of very poor Character, drank very much to excess & led his wife a perfect dog's life by his brutal treatment. She was arranging divorce proceedings in consequence of his brutality.

A J Noctovich

Const 4440

Perph (arrived)
Richmond

Forwarded

The City Coroner }
Melb

(826/14)

Karman
Sgt 2nd
3.4.14

Name of Witness.

Statement.

Harriett Duncan States I am the wife of John
 Duncan & I reside with my mother
 at 27 Douvres St. Richmond. My
 husbands name was John Thomas
 Duncan. On Friday night the 20-3-14
 at about 9 pm I saw him at Newland
 St. Richmond. I spoke to him for about
 10 minutes. When leaving me he
 stated he was going to Koo-wee-rup
 & said he would write to me to the
 Subj. P. Office in the name of M^{rs}.
 James Little. I never received any
 letters. I wrote the letter to M^{rs}. Johnston
 of Koo-wee-rup signed M^{rs}. James Little
 after I had seen the account of the
 suicide of James Little in the newspaper.
 I also wrote the letter to Constable Cole
 of Laug Laug giving my correct name.
 I have been shown the slip of
 paper ~~that~~ found on the deceased
 & now marked A and I identify the
 writing on it; the words "John Duncan"
 as the writing of my husband. I am
 satisfied that the deceased James Little
 is identical with my husband John
 Thomas Duncan.

The above statement has been read
 over to me by Const. Noakes and
 it is correct.

H. Duncan

VICTORIA POLICE—(47)

City morgue. Russell Street

Station. Melbourne Police District.

6th April 1914

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REPORT of Const Watson 4778.

Relative to Inquest on body of James Little otherwise
John Duncan.

Mr Cohen P.M. has informed me that he will
conclude the Inquest on the body of the above-named deceased
some afternoon this week at the City Morgue.

Enquiries have ben made and there is no doubt that ~~but~~
the deceased was named John Duncan. If you have any clothing
or property that was found on the deceased, would you be good
enough to forward same to the Morgue as soon as possible, as
it will be requiried to establish identity.

Watson

Const Cole.

Const 4778.

Lang Lang.

*Lang Lang
7/4/14*

*I am forwarding by this evening's
train addressed to you one parcel
the called for at Flinders Street Station
containing one pair of old trousers
one pair of old boots and an old
pillow slip belonging to John Duncan
alias James Little deceased. That
is all I could find belonging to
him*

14/4/14

*Const Watson
City Morgue*

*W. Cole
Mc4123*

Lang Lang

Station *Bong* Police District

27 March 1914

REPORT of

N. Cole Mc 4183

Relative to

Inquest on James Little

I have to report for the information of Mr Cohen that Mr Johnston of Koo-wee-Rup received the attached letter and handed it to me. I have no doubt that the description she gives is that of her husband, he was Clean Shaven and was wearing new boots. I did not notice the jail tattooed on his arm. I have written to Mr Little asking her to call on you at the Bureau so that you can get the necessary particulars from her.

P. Cohen Esq
The Bureau

114/14

N. Cole
Mc 4183

City Mayor
14/4

^{re reports} Mr. Cohen P. M. directs that the attached letter, be shown to Mrs John Duncan 27 Bouverie Street Richmond, also the pieces of paper attached which were found on the body of deceased, also a report to be made attaching a statement from her, as to whether she is satisfied that the deceased was her husband, and what was his proper name.

Sgt Duncan
Richmond

N. Watson
1175

1
Charles Morris on oath
said I am a labourer at Koo
Wa Koo - I reside at 321
Johnston St Collingwood. I
am 17 years of age. I came up
on Saturday night - I had been working
for a week at Daburree. - I slept
in the Railway yards with my mate -
Richard Maynard.

I saw deceased in the baker's
shop on Saturday night at Koo Wa Koo
- He was singing - he was drunk. - This
was between half past 8 and 9 o'clock.

Never saw deceased again till
Sunday morning about half past 9.
he was then under the bridge - he had
been sleeping there. Deceased said
to us. Are you looking for work. I said
Yes. - Can you get us a job - Deceased
said Yes. Come out with me about
2 miles and I'll get you a job of
potato digging. - Deceased gave us a
tin of fish - and we then went away
to the place. we all worked together.

Deceased said his name was
James Little and that he had been
lawmaking in Smith Street Collingwood.
I should say his age was about 30.

Deceased said he had been on the track
since 1894 and that he was 11 years
old. Deceased and I went to the
farm - saw the farmer there. His
name is Johnson. I said. Do you
want any men for spud-digging.

Johnson said Yes - My mate
was at the camp. cooking the dinner
I got employment for my mate and
myself. We then returned to the
camp for dinner. Deceased had
a swag - he also had a bottle of
whisky which he was drinking freely
Deceased opened the bottle of whisky
at the camp - I did not drink any
- my mate did not have any
- He is about my age.

Deceased went down to the house
He got through the window and
got the gun now produced also about
10 cartridges. Deceased said
he wanted the gun to shoot rabbits.

When he came out with the gun. he
fired a couple of shots at a dray - I
fired one shot at a plough - We
then went back ^{toward} the camp

Deceased said I'm going to
shoot your mate. I said Give
me the gun and I'll shoot him.

I said this so as to get the gun
off him. Deceased gave me the
gun and I fired it in the air.

Deceased then said Give
me the gun - I gave it to him.

When we reached the camp. Deceased
put another cartridge in. He then
shook an old man that was near.

I took the gun off him again - as
he was fooling around with it. Deceased
then put the gun down. he laid down

for a few minutes. Deceased then said. Come on will go and shoot rabbit. I walked up the road some distance with the gun. Deceased caught up to me and said give me the gun. I'll get some. I gave him the gun. Deceased said. You walk along the road and I'll walk in the scrub. I walked on a little distance and ~~deceased~~ turned around. I had gone about 20 yards. I saw deceased bending over the gun. just as I saw him the gun exploded and deceased fell back. - I ran towards him, deceased was lying on his back the gun was lying across him - there was a strap attached to the trigger and it was looped over his foot.

I saw the strap when, deceased had it around his waist - Deceased did not speak or move. I ran across the paddock to get my mate. This took me about 3 minutes. My mate came and looked at the body and said you had better go for the police. - I got a ride into Koor Wee Koor and was then driven to Lang Lang where I reported it to Constable Cole.

I went back with the Constable and took him to the body. - It was in the same position as when I left it.

My mates people live in Collingwood. My father lives in Collingwood. I do not live with him - I had never

34

seen before. The farmer
who employed us was named Johnson.
Demaria had been working for
Johnson before.

Charles Morris.

25

Sador Johnson on oath said I
am a farmer living with my father
at Kootenai. - I have seen the body
of deceased now lying at Lang Lang
Hotel. I identify the body as that of
a man known to me as Jim Little.

I last saw him on Sunday
morning. he was then with a young
fellow who was looking for a job.

I do not think deceased was robber.
He had worked for us for about
10 days. When I paid him up
he said he was going to town. He
earned about £4. During the time
he worked for us. I knew nothing
of the man prior to working for us.
The gun produced is my property
deceased never had the use of it.

E. J. Johnson.

William Cole made with I
am a Constable of Police at Lang Lang.

On Sunday 22nd inst. the witness
Morris reported to me that a man
had shot himself at Koo Tree Koo.

I proceeded to the place and found
a man lying on his back with a
gun shot wound on the forehead
faced down. his arms were extended
and lying on his right side. The
gun was produced with a strap
attached to his foot. I examined
the body but found no marks of
violence. It was clothed in shirt
vest and trousers. From the position
of the body it appeared that the man
had released the trigger by pulling
the strap with his foot. The empty
cartridge shell was in the gun and
two loaded ones in his pocket.

There was also $\frac{1}{2}$ in his pocket.

The two pieces of paper produced
were also in his pocket. I have not
had any opportunity of making
inquiries as to his identity. There
was no sign of any struggle where
the man was lying.

The evidence of Charles Morris
Jude Johnson and William Cole
taken and sworn before me at
Lang Lang in Victoria this 23rd
day of March 1914

W. Cole
MC 4125

Philip Cohen

pm.