

## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* William Simpson

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at 133 Windermere Street Redan

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I went below at midnight. I was on night shift. William King and me were trucking. On going down the shaft I went to the top of the balance shaft. I went to No. 3 shoot for the trolley leaving my mate King at the No. 2 shoot. When I returned he was pulling wood on the top of the balance shaft. I was pulling with him until it was finished. Mansfield, O'Keefe and Heggarty came up to us. I saw James Hunter. He came down from the No. 2 shoot. He said "Things are in a terrible state up the No. 2 shoot". He said to Mansfield, "I do not want any firewood up there as it will take us all this shift to clean up. He said nothing about roaring. I never heard him describe what he meant by the terrible state. He said he would not go back there to work. I can recollect nothing else that he said. I do not remember hearing him say "It was not fit for anybody to work in" I did not hear Mansfield say anything that I remember. Mansfield was Boss of the shift. He was not hard of hearing. I do not remember anyone saying "I remember him (Hunter) saying that things are in an awful state up here, it is roaring like thunder". I do not remember whether I made that statement to Constable Rogerson. Mansfield said to Hunter, "Where is your son Jack". Some of them asked Hunter where was Jack? I would not be sure he said it. Hunter replied "He left Jack in the face with his foot against the lath keeping the sand back. I do not know whether it was a pretty dangerous position. I was not up there to see. I did not hear Mansfield say anything. Mansfield went to

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on h oath saith, I am a.....

residing at.....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

No. 2 shoot with a trolley load of firewood for building the horse. Hunter followed him with a truck load of firewood, up the No. 2 shoot. King, O'Keefe and Heggarty went up then. I stayed behind picking up laths. I went then into No. 2 shoot and King was standing at the bottom of the shoot with the windlass chain in his hand with a bundle of firewood. He sang out "Heave up" to the man on top and as soon as he said heave up, there was a gush of wind which came down and put the lights out. I said to him "What was that". He said "I do not know" and there was a rattling sort of noise and the sand and water came down. I got struck on the side with a piece of wood of some sort. It knocked me down. I got up and ran against a truck and the water swept in the truck against me and jammed me. I reached up to the back laths and drew myself out of that. As soon as I did, I gave three or four trucks a shove and sang out to King to get on with me. that we may travel faster. We went on with our trucks and the front one jammed them at the No. 1 points. As soon as they did we grabbed hold of the leg on the side of the drive and hung on that till McGrath came along. He sang out "Move on". We put our hands on the air pipes and ran down to the balance shaft. McGrath asked us would we go down and we said "No". So he got on the ladders and asked me if I would follow him. I replied Yes. I went down the ladders till the water caught me on the shoulders and the stream was too strong. I came back again.

When I came back King had lit the candles on top of the balance

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

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This Deponent\*.....

on h oath saith, I am a.....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

residing at.....

shaft and then Heggarty came along . We gave him a candle and he put it between two nails <sup>on</sup> and a leg on top of the balance shaft and said Leave it there and then he asked us were we going down. We said No. and he replied here goes and put his arms round the balance shaft chain and went down and we never saw any more of him. Then the father came down George Simpson and he asked us to go down and have a look where the water was. King went down and said, it was a foot off the air pipes. He came up and the three of us went up the intermediate level to try to barricade the water up. When we went up to the No. 1 points, we saw Mansfield and James Hunter ~~lying~~ lying dead. We just had a look and went back to the balance shaft and stayed there for a while and went up to the intermediate level again. Saw James Hunter and Mansfield the second time. We came back to the balance shaft and my father wanted us to go down. We would not and he went down himself and he said he was coming back but he never came back. We went on top of the balance shaft wheel and stayed there till Mr. Fitches and Bowles came and relieved us, We were there 48 hours. Before the breaking in, I dreamt of a burst of water the night before we came to work. I got called up to go to work. I had not been thinking about the danger at any time - not when the water was coming in. I never dreamt ~~dreams~~ about the water at any other time. I do not know whether the ground was heavy. I never was up to take any notice of it.

Taken and Sworn before me the 16<sup>th</sup> day  
of June 190 2 at Ballarat (Signed) W Simpson  
W D Jacobson  
Coroner. 98



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* William Davidson

on his oath saith, I am a Cabman living at 66 Urquhart Street

/ residing at Ballarat

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I was formerly a miner. I was one of the party that put down a shaft on Sago Hill in 1859. It was called the Briton. It was not known by any other name that I am aware of. We bottomed I think about 120 feet and we opened out in reef sunk 20 feet in reef, and opened with 10 feet of reef in the back. We drove 70 feet - it was quite dry. The water was bailed with hide buckets. We arranged that each shift should keep the water down at the week's end, from the Saturday till the Sunday. On a week end the shift did not go down to bail and we found the water was a considerable distance up the shaft. We had water in sinking from the surface to the bottom. It was all gravel and drift. That is about a half a mile from the Cardigan mine South.

Cross-examined -

I cannot tell you whether it is over a mile. I think it is near a half a mile. It is not over a mile but I will not swear it. Sago Hill is past Walsh's Hotel. Our claim was near No. 5 Reform It was near the school to the left. It was 3 or four hundred yards farther on on top of the Hill.

Taken and Sworn before me the 16<sup>th</sup> day  
of June 1902 at Ballarat  
(Signed W<sup>m</sup> Davidson)  
W. Davidson  
Coroner.

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* John Murrayon his oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

*WD* I am a slaughterman <sup>residing</sup> at 98 Darling Street. I am brother-in-law of John. Hunter. Before the disaster I had conversation with John Hunter about the month before and he reckoned the claim was none too safe to work in. He reckoned if he could get a billet anywhere else he would sooner take it. He thought it was just as well to stop there as there was no place to get a billet at the time. I never saw him afterwards.

Cross-examined -

He did not tell me it was on account of the ground. He did not mention anything about the water.

To the Coroner - I know nothing about the claim myself. I just asked him how he was getting along. That is what brought up the conversation. He did not say anything about being frightened. I did not ask him what was his reason or why it was not too safe to work there. He was in a hurry going to Ballarat. He did not mention anything about looking after a billet but he said if he could get any other mine to work in he would leave.

Adjourned to Tuesday 17th.

Taken and Sworn before me the 16<sup>th</sup> dayof June 1902 at Ballarat

*WD*  
*W. D. C. B. O. M.*

Coroner.

(Signed) *J Murray*

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Tuesday 17 June 1902  
**CORONER'S INQUEST.**

[No. 53.]

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* Charles Colborne Growcott

on h oath saith, I am a Collector for the Water Commission  
residing at Ballarat.

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full

I was Manager of the Excel Gold Mining Company in 1862, 1832 and 1864 at Bunker's Hill. I have marked a dot on the Exhibit "C" between the All England and the Reform Company's shaft. The spot I have marked is about the position of the Excel Company's shaft. It was about a quarter of a mile from the Cardigan or from the All England pretty well due East a little South of West. It was further away from the Cardigan than the All Wngland. I sunk the shaft and managed the mine, during the sinking. It was sunk about 150 feet deep it may be more or less, I think not less. We put in about 1000 feet of driving. Not more than 200 feet in the direction of the All England. I sunk ths shaft we had trouble with the water. It was one of the worst shafts ever I saw and in the drives equally difficult. All driving was done with close faced boarding. We had both bursts and steady water. We had some very heavy bursts of water. I recollect the bursts because I was in connection with it and washed out of the drive. That drive was about 200 feet or a little more from the shaft and we had a burst there. that is a burst of sand. The men working there had a running as we term it in mining phrase. It was pretty considerable too and it fastened me in up to the waist and my mate had to take his shirt off and he closed it in until we gave him assistance and they managed to close the burst up. A considerable amount of sand flowed to the shaft and starved our pumps and closed the pumps up. We had over 200 feet nearly filled up in that instance.

Taken and Sworn before me the \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_ 190 \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Coroner.

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VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

It took about 3 weeks to clear up. The pumps were 11 inch. I do not recollect about the water coming down the shaft at that time but the second occasion when I was closed in I remember. After the burst the drive was abandoned and there would be a very large cavity. And it appears to me in course of time as the water filled in the cavity it kept the ground back and formed a kind of reservoir. I remember the Directorate and expert men too some of them insisting upon our opening this drive and I well recollect persuading them to go round it and that I thought there would be a great danger of a burst from the water in the front and overhead. There was a little gold there and they wanted to obtain it I presume. We had pressure to bear and I yet recollect telling the men to remain there and if the burst takes place you make for the shaft. The burst did take place. We were working with 3 inch face boards and I took a half of it out and it seemed alright and I took the other half out and that seemed alright and I began to take another half out and I heard a roaring like thunder. I remember the debris forcing itself in at such a rate until it knocked it over and I remember nothing else until I was at the door bucket. I was washed with <sup>the</sup> sand and I must have climbed up the pumps. I was at the bucket door.

Cross-examined -

There was a little broken rock only. We had no solid rock. There was very little rock. I am not aware of any higher reef between

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* .....

on h oath saith, I am a .....

residing at .....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

us and the All England shaft. We did not drive that far. Our lead was dipping towards the All England or towards the Cardigan. The Reform Company was not working at that time. They worked subsequently and carried on extensive works. Their experience of the water was similar. The Race Course was the same. These are the mines dipping towards Haddon on the other side of Haddon. We were a quarter of a mile further away to the West from the All England shaft more up the hill. We were on the top of Bunker's Hill. I have never discovered that the lead was dipping towards Haddon. I always thought it was dipping towards where the Cardigan is now. The Reform and the Racecourse were known as the Haddon lead. I would take the Cardigan to be a different lead from the Haddon lead in my judgment. I do not know whether other experienced miners would think so.

Re-examined -

The depth of the wash varied sometimes we would not have 6 inches and sometimes 5 feet. The greatest depth of the wash was nearly to the height of the drive there.

To the Jury -

Q. - Would not the range on the top of Bunker's Hill divide the two leads ?

A. - I never looked upon it as being having anything to do with the Reform lead. We were a little East of the old road that goes over the top of the Hill to the Reform.

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*.....

on h oath saith, I am a.....

residing at.....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

W.D.

To the Coroner - We found our ground swelling ground. The whole of the ground is what you would call swelling ground. I have been in the Racecourse <sup>gravel</sup> and I knew the weight of water and drift to force through the bed reef 16 feet breaking it right down into the main drives. The Racecourse would be a little South of West and it would be a little to the North of the Haddon. It would be nearly two miles away. I know nothing about the Cardigan claim myself. I have only seen it in passing.

To the Jury - Was the gutter you were working a gutter or a crab-hole ?

A. - It had the appearance of a gutter, but our principal clay was on the higher reef and in the gutter there were large boulders sometimes four to five tons in weight. It did not dip quickly enough for me to be able to tell positively the way it did dip.

Taken and Sworn before me the 17<sup>th</sup> dayof June 1902at Ballarat

(signed) C. C. Growcott

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Coroner.

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* Michael O'Keefeon his oath saith, I am a laborerresiding at Haddon\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I am a brother to John O'Keefe who was killed in the mine. I had conversation with him as to the work. My brother told me on a week or two previous that they had some bursts of water there and I told him that it was not safe to work there and he had better leave. He said the ground was all crushing and they had bursts of water. I told him to leave that it was not safe to be in it. He reckoned that it would give warning enough to get away.

Cross-examined -

He never told me that to tell his mates that were working in the mine at the time. It would not surprise me if they said they had never heard any statements from my brother. I have never had conversation with any of them. I was about the mine to the time when he was got out. I first told about the conversation to Constable Rogerson. I did not tell Mr. Harris because it was none of my business. Constable Rogerson asked me for conversation and that is the reason I gave it. I saw Mr. Harris after the accident on several occasions. I never said anything to him about what my brother said. I never mentioned it to the Inspector. My brother last spoke to me about a fortnight before the accident. He told me at our place. He told me he thought he was in peril of his life. He told me about the bursts of water. I think there were bursts then. They seemed to say there were. I read in the papers about the bursts. I know there was water coming out of there last

October from the back. I expect my brother knew of that too.

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at \_\_\_\_\_

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I do not know whether that was one of the bursts he was afraid of.

I was working in the mine at the time. My brother did not speak

to me about that burst because he had no occasion to. It was not

*As to the burst*  
a serious one. ~~The one~~ that my brother referred to as a serious one,

~~was the one where there were a 1~~, There was a lot of difference

*burst my brother referred to as a serious one*  
between that and ~~in~~ the burst in October. A small burst might come

away and get choked and it might make a bigger one. I think I had

as much experience as any man in that mine. Nobody has told me

that since the disaster occurred. I have not read it in the papers.

I thought that myself that these small bursts might have accum-

ulated water. It might have been over the blocked out ~~ground~~. It

was going to accumulate between the ground and the rock. I would

be surprised to hear that it was a characteristic of a mine to

swell up to the rock in a fortnight. I know that they used to put

men on on a Sunday to open up the drives because they had closed

up so much. This is a very common thing in most mines. the bottom

swelling up and the men clearing it off on Sundays. I was afraid

that this water was going to accumulate between the space at the

back of the drives and on top of the old ground. That was what I

and my brother were afraid of. As for the water that has been

pumped out it may not all be contained in the old ground, but when

it got bent it would come through other places. My brother was

friendly with all the men on the mine. The water was coming from

the rock all the time and it is when the ground came down that it

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Coroner.

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

had

let the water away, that ~~it~~ accumulated. It must have come from  
the rock all the time.

Re-examined -

Mr. Barrett referred to the Echo of the 14th. March which contained  
a statement of Mr. Michael O'Keefe - I made that statement to  
Mr. Powell on that date. (Mr. Barrett read report in Echo)

*Exhibit "T"* That statement is correct (Ex: "T") The first time I saw Rogerson  
was a Sunday or two ago. I helped to sink the shaft. I was work-  
ing off and on for 5 or 6 years.

To Mr. Clarke - I have never spoken to anyone about a probable  
action against the Company. I know that under any circumstances  
my brother's representatives would have an action against the  
Company. Nobody explained that to me at all. I only think so.  
I have never discussed it with anybody or spoken to anybody about  
it.

Taken and Sworn before me the 17<sup>th</sup> day  
of June 190 2 at Ballarat

*W. Duckson*

Coroner.

(signed) *Michael O'Keefe*

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* John Pyne

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Eyre Street Ballarat

\* Christian and Surname in full.

I am working at the Cardigan Proprietary. I had been working there before the accident about 10 months. I was day shift on the day of the accident 18th. March from 8 o'clock to 4 p.m. I was working in the No. 2 shoot up to 4 p.m. Everything appeared safe so far as I could see. Before that time there was a little water coming away. There was no burst of water that I knew of. I noticed a little more water coming when I went on the shift following that which I worked. There was nothing to speak of. It was coming from the old blocking as far as I could see. I did not discuss it with my mates. Mr. Harris was down that day before the accident on the day shift. I never heard discussions with Mr. Harris and my mates as to the water. I knew about the abandoned blocks where the ground came down. They were abandoned I think because it was pretty poor and it would not pay to take out. That is the only reason I came to. I never heard it discussed. I was working all round the blocks that were abandoned.

Q. - The Manager says "When That they were abandoned because they could not keep them open on account of water troubles".

Mr. Clarke objects - The Manager did not say this it was not on account of the water troubles. He gave an explanation that they could not keep it open and it would not pay to keep it open.

Mr. Barrett - I am dealing with his reports.

Mr. Barrett to Witness - Q. - "Blocked out ground coming down with strong streams and large quantities of sand" What do you say

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

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This Deponent\*.....

on h oath saith, I am a.....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

residing at.....

to that ?

A. - I remember about that time. I did not notice any large quantities of sand coming, that is when the blocking came down. I did not notice a stream of water. There was not a strong stream I do not know anything about the reports. Mr. Barrett read from Report of March 6th. "Water about the same coming away in small bursts in the main drive. Ground exceedingly heavy, great difficulty in keeping it <sup>up</sup> out. Compelled to abandon two blocks and found impossible to keep it open".

A. - I do not know anything about the reports.

Mr. Barrett - "A number of pieces of basaltic rock coming away with the sand". What do you know about that ?

A. - I do not know anything about it. It does not surprise me to hear that a number of pieces of rock were coming away with the sand.

Q. - "Strongly of opinion that the rock has given way from the ground being so heavy" .

A. - I never heard anything about the rock giving way overhead. I cannot tell when I saw the rock. It was about two or three days before the accident. I was by myself when I saw the rock. I happened to look round. There was some block which had come down and I had seen pieces of rock that had come down. I did not see the rock itself overhead. I did not look overhead, but pieces

tumbled in on me from overhead. After these blocks fell there was

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\* Christian and  
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full.

no water where I saw the rock. I saw the rock after it fell.

To the Coroner - The pieces of rocks were small boulders.

Cross-examined -

I have had 10 years experience in alluvial mining. I worked in the British Banner Pitfield. I have been off and on for 4 years at the Cardigan. I knew O'Keefe. He never mentioned anything to me about mine being dangerous. Hunter did not. I saw O'Keefe frequently, every change of shift. He never suggested to me that the mine was in any way dangerous. I did not consider it was in any way dangerous. I was one of the tributors. I never left on account of the danger. I worked right through. When I was working along the drive, I could see the rock on both sides. I could see it also overhead at places. I was working up to 4 p.m. at the date of the accident. When I left there I considered everything was perfectly safe. That was the opinion of my mates. My mates were Pat Bowles and Dave Adams was the shift Boss.

Re-examined -

I am a tributor. I was a tributor up to the last of the tributors. I never heard of anyone wanting to take the ground out where the accident was supposed to have occurred. There was a bit of a barney over some ground on the East side of the shoot. There were a lot of them who wanted to take that out. They thought there was a bit of gold there. I never heard of anyone preventing them.

I never heard any barney, it was just between the men in the shaft.

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They said that was going to bring the shoot down if they took that ground out. That was the ground on the East side. They would not block up the shoot if they took it down. I suppose the Manager prevented them. So far as I knew that ground was still there up to my shift. We were working to it within about 40 feet.

Taken and Sworn before me the

17<sup>th</sup>

day

of

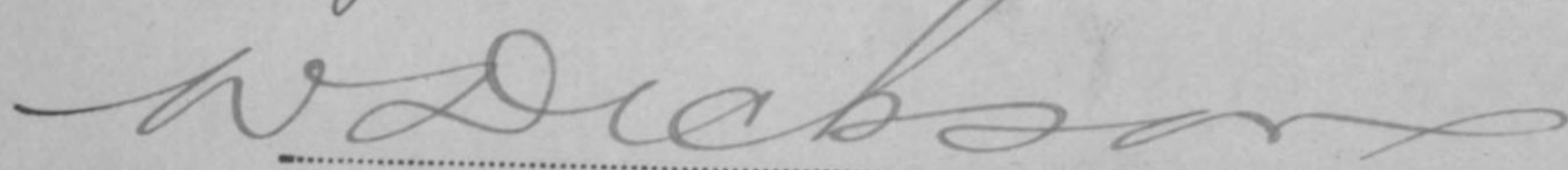
June

1902

at

Ballarat

(Signed) John Ryne



Coroner.

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* David Adams

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Latrobe Street Ballarat

\* Christian and Surname full.

I was on the day shift when the last witness (Pyne) was working at the time of the accident. I have been a miner close on 30 years. I was the Boss of that particular shift. The water was not troublesome. If a man was to write and say that the water was troublesome I should not call him a liar. I say we had a little more water but nothing extra. It did not trouble us. I recollected the 28th. February when the back ground came down. I was working there when it came down. It brought with it a drop of water nothing to speak of. I never noticed anything else, there might be a little sand but nothing to speak of.

Mr. Barrett read "Blocked out ground came down bringing large streams and quantities of ground".

I can't tell you what that means. All I can say is that it was a little drop of water and a little bit of stone. I could not say there were large quantities of stone and strong streams of water. I was not there at the time. It might have been on the other shift. If I had been told that the blocked out ground had come down and brought large quantities of sand and streams of water I would not have gone in there. I cannot say what I would have done. I might have gone home and gone to bed. I never knew that and never saw it.

Q. - "Water came away, <sup>thunk</sup> pool accumulated beneath the rock". Would you call that description a little bit of water and a pinch of sand ?

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VICTORIA, TO WIT.

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Surname in  
full.

A. - I never saw it..

Q. - Supposing you saw that as a true account of what was there  
and that it was probably coming from the pool beneath the rock ?A. - I would have made some inquiries, if I heard about it, but  
I never heard about it.

Q. - On March 1st. the South West drive was crushed a little bit?

A. - It was crushed a great lot, it was heavy ground and the  
ground was swelling. I say that the crushing of the South West  
weight  
drive was from the swelling and the ~~wet~~ coming down. The  
weight when you take out ground and the ground dragging from the  
drive. The South West drive being crushed would have nothing to  
do with the water. I cannot see where it would have anything to  
do with the water.

Q. - Manager says that "the drive crushed from the water coming  
down" ?A. - I do not think there was any water there. I never heard that  
it was crushed through the water coming down a good bit. I never  
heard of any trouble.Q. - The Manager says "Considerable amount of sand coming away  
causing a lot of trouble". "Water broke away from the main drive  
near the No. 1 crosscuts" ?

A. - I never heard of them.

Q. - Manager says "compelled to keep men Sunday caulking and  
clearing up sand" ?

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full.

A. - We have been on on Sundays stoping up drives. I do not recollect March 3rd. Some of the other men might have been on. I was not on. On March 4th. Manager says "Another burst last night works delayed, water up to seven strokes". I never heard of that. I never heard of water coming away in main drive and being troublesome. I never heard from the Manager anything about their having any trouble with the water nor that the water came from a pool overhead.

Cross-examined -

I have never been a Manager myself. I do not know what is reported to the Directors. There were two blocks of ground that were abandoned. We left them between No. 2 and 3 drives. They were left I think because they were a bit heavy and dragging from the rock, coming down, and they were too poor to take out. They would not pay to go to the trouble to take them out. I do not think there was gold enough in it to pay. They were not abandoned on account of any danger, I am sure of that. My 30 years experience as miner has been for the biggest part in alluvial mines. I do not know of the pieces of ground that Mr. Harris would not allow us to work on the West. The piece of ground was on the East of the shoot that Mr. Harris would not allow them to take out and if they took it out it would bring the face down. If O'Keefe said Manager stopped them taking out the ground on the West it would be a lie as far as I am concerned. We had a pipe of 6 inches replaced with 8 inches. The

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on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

additional two inches took all the water and it would have taken more. I regard all water as troublesome in the workings. Before the blocking came down and the extra drop of water we had not enough water to keep the tools clean in all the faces. No tributors left on account of the fear of the mine. I had no fear of the mine while I was working there. O'Keefe was not on my shift. I used to see him. He never communicated any fears to me and never said anything about being afraid. As we were working along the drive the rock was visible in several places both North and South and above me in No. 1 shoot. I would never have thought of boring to see if there was any water when I had a rock both sides of me. I knew Mansfield. I saw him just the same as O'Keefe. I saw more of him as he was the Boss. I relieved Mansfield. He spoke to me when he was coming off. When we leave the shift Boss communicates to the other shift Boss. Mansfield communicated nothing to me the shift before. He did not say that he considered the mine unsafe at anytime. I regard him as a good sound practical miner. I have known Mr. Mansfield since he was a boy. As for the sand that was coming away, it caused a little trouble in the workings. There was no danger attached to it at all, not what I saw of it. It was what we would reasonably expect. I have seen it in hundreds of mines. I think this accident would never have occurred unless something extraordinary had happened. I have no opinion as to how the water came in, it is a mystery to me.

Taken and Sworn before me the.....day

of.....190

at.....

Coroner.)

115



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

Re-examined -

I never heard anybody say he was afraid of working there. I never worked in any place where I was afraid very much. I have seen men afraid in some other mines. In the Racecourse sometimes when the ground was coming down. When the old ground was dragging and them men would not care to go into it. I have not got any opinion as to how the water came in.

Taken and Sworn before me the

of

June

1902

at

Ballarat

day

(signed)

W Adams

Coroner.

110

116



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* Alfred Taylor

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Ballarat East

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I have been a miner 10 years. I was employed in the Cardigan prior to the accident about 8 or 9 months. I was working in the same shift as the last witness. The only thing I saw was a slight burst in the side of the main drive. I could not call it a burst. I daresay it would cause a little trouble and cause us men to be put on on Sunday to stop it. I did not see what I would call a burst there at all. I would call it a burst of water if it would hunt men from their work. Not as long as the pumps would contend with it and the downpipes would carry. There was a burst somewhere about 3 weeks before the disaster. It was somewhere about the same time as when the ground came down.

Q. - "Blocked out ground came down bringing large quantities of water".

I did not see sand.

Q. - What about the strong stream?

A. - I did not consider that there was any-thing that we could not contend with. If the Manager reported that the blocked out ground had come down and brought a large quantity of sand and large streams of water, I did not see anything of the sort. I cannot say why the Manager reported that on the 24th. February if it did not occur. I recollect the blocked out ground coming down. There was not a large quantity coming away with a quantity of sand as far as I know. It might have happened on other shifts. I never heard of it till you read it to me.

Taken and Sworn before me the ..... day

of ..... 190

at .....

Coroner.

117



## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

Q. - Manager says "Water came down and finding vent over the drive South West drive crushed". ?

A. - I considered it was the amount of ground standing on the timber that caused the crushing. It was not the water.

Q. - Manager says "South West drive crushed a good bit owing to water and weight. No. 3 North and finding vent over No. 3 drive"  
Do you agree with that ?

A. - It is possible that it would. That is not my opinion. On the Monday I do not know whether the water increased. I do not know whether it broke away over the main drive near the No. 1 crosscuts. I never heard good bad or indifferent of any trouble with the water there not any liability to any inburst of water.

I only heard of one inburst of water from the blocked out ground.

Cross - examined -

I have come here to tell the truth. I have heard Mr. Adams say that the addition of the 2 inches to the pipe carried off the water easy. I am sure it did carry the water off. I never noticed any difference in the plat with the water all the time I was there. I never saw water on the plat. I would not work there if I thought it was dangerous.

To the Coroner - I was a tributor. I was working in No. 1 shoot when I was on tribute. It was perfectly safe.

Taken and Sworn before me the 17<sup>th</sup> day

of June 1907 at Ballarat

(signed) Alfred Taylor

Coroner.

118

112



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* James Hillon his oath saith, I am an Engine Driverresiding at Talbot Street Ballarat\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

(Afternoon Sitting) -

I was Engine Driver at the time of the disaster. I was on day shift on the 18th. March.

Cross-examined -

On one or two occasions there was an increase of water. We had after no difficulty with the pumps in carrying on. On the day of the accident 19th. March the pumps were affected by the sand. It cut the clacks about a little bit, not perceptible that day. Previous to the 19th. the pumps were not in good order. They were quite capable of doing all the work that was required and of coping with the water that was in. There was practically no water for the pumps.

Re-examined -

I have been in Court and heard reports read. In my opinion the Manager's reports are true. On the 28th. February I was day shift. I increased the speed of the pumps from 5 to  $8\frac{1}{2}$  strokes in about two hours. That would be about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  strokes. something like 70 gallons a minute or more. On an increase subsequent to that we did not have to increase them. I do not remember of any. March 9th. was not my shift. About the 28th. February they were about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  strokes in my shift. I cannot say where the bursts of water came from. The pumps were not in good order on the 19th. They got out of order. They were not in good order 13 months ago.

The clacks were bad. They were constantly getting worse. On the

Taken and Sworn before me the \_\_\_\_\_ day

of \_\_\_\_\_ 190

at \_\_\_\_\_

Coroner.)

119

113



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

19th. the bad state of the pumps would have the effect of lessening it about one third. They would only discharge about two thirds of what they would discharge if they were in good order. They got worse after that. They were at their worst I think, 3 days after the accident. It was the night after the boys came up from below. I was afraid to stop the pumps for fear I could not get the water any more. The pumps would be discharging not one third of what they out to do. Then we stopped and changed the clack.

Re-examined -

The cause of the pumps getting into this state was I suppose the sand coming away in the water, it would cut the leather.

To the Jury -

Q. - Did you at anytime hear the men complain about going below or of the water on the plat ?

A. - They never had any water to speak of. The only time there was water on the plat was on the 28th. Febry. I let the water rise on the plat about 4 inches on account of the sand to keep the sand out of the well. Otherwise the water was always off the plat. We could keep it off the plat. The clacks and the seatings were cut and bad before the accident. The condition of the pumps was not neglected altogether. They were doing more than we wanted to do and it was to our advantage to keep the pumps as they were. If they were good they would have to be stopped so often. It was to our advantage to keep them as they were.

Taken and Sworn before me the

17<sup>th</sup>

day

of June 1907 at Ballarat

*W. Dickson*  
Coroner.

*(Signed) Jas Hill*  
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