

# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* William Richardson his oath saith, I am a Minerresiding at Gardigan\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I was on the shift at the mine from 4 p.m. till midnight on the 18th. March. I worked in the North blocking face till 12 o'clock. There was no water it was dry and dry in our face when we came away I have heard nothing about any inburst of water. I have seen little but nothing to talk about. On the 28th. February when the blocks came down it was nothing to talk about. I worked in the same block after from No. 1 shoot. We were in the far end on the 28th. February. Our party took it down. We were working at these blocks. The cause of the blocks being abandoned was dragging of the country and the ground was not worth taking out. It would take more timber than the money would take out. The country is sure to drag not like a drift country. The blocks being abandoned had nothing to do with the water question. I have worked in No. 5 Reform up to our knees and took ground out but they never worked over ankle deep. Before the ground was abandoned we had it barricaded. The object of barricading was the dragging of the country and heavy ground. We barricade in heavy ground. We cannot keep water back with barricading. It will come anywhere. I know all the country I worked at 20 years ago.

Q. - Manager's Report of 28th. February says "Blocked out ground came down bringing strong stream with large quantity of sand". Is that true ?

A. - That is between No. 3 and 4 block South. There was a lot of ground that came down. It was coming from No. 1 and 3 shoot and

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

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

Coroner.)

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

on h oath saith, I am a

residing at

\* Christian and  
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full.

the rock too. From 10 months till now. I have seen rock on No.  
1 shoot. At the time there was not a strong stream coming away.  
There was a little more.

Cross-examined -

I was not afraid to work at the mine. I knew O'Keefe well and  
worked with him. We were mates. He never told me he was afraid  
of the mine and he never made reference to me about the ground  
being dangerous. I have worked in the Reform No 5 that is at Sago  
Hill. The lead went away North West. We worked up Bunkers and had  
bursts there, nothing to talk about. That lead is the other way  
from the Cardigan ground I think. This would come the Cardigan  
way if there was any lead there.

Re-cross-examined -

I have heard my mate say the ground was heavy. I have never heard  
anyone say that the ground was exceedingly heavy. It was not  
exceedingly heavy. There was no great difficulty in keeping it  
open.

Q. - Manager says on March 6th. "Ground exceedingly heavy great  
difficulty in keeping it open" ?

A. - It might be heavy in the block that he was taking out. I  
have not seen any drive crush there.

Q. - Were <sup>any of</sup> ~~not all~~ the drives crushed ?

A. - I have never seen any. You could always go into the drive

On the 29th. February 1891 when the blocked out ground came down  
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on h oath saith, I am a

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full.

some of the drôves were crushed. It was not dangerous ground when  
the drives were crushed. It is not dangerous until it comes down  
on top of you.

Taken and Sworn before me the

17<sup>th</sup>

day

of

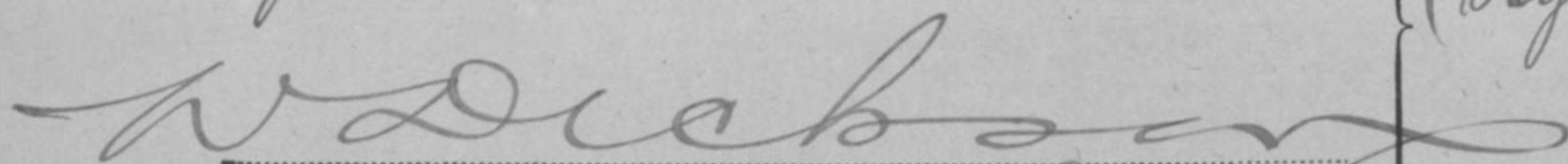
June

1907

at

Ballarat

(Signed) William Richards



Coroner.

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* James Hegarty

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Sago Hill Haddon

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I was on the night shift on the 19th. March. I was platman. I went down at midnight and I had orders from the Captain of the shift Mansfield to get down firewood to build a stack up in the workings. A horse underground is a stack of wood. John O'Keefe and William Mansfield assisted me to take it down the balance shaft. From there we went it to the intermediate level. Nearly all the men took a truck of wood into the No. 2 shoot. When I got there at the No. 2 shoot every-thing was quiet. We had very little water there. There was a little coming at the time we went in. I was not working there when I heard a noise. About half past one o'clock I got in and I heard a burst. I was in at No. 3 shoot with John McGrath and George Simpson. I was platman on the bottom level. I had no business up there. I went up there because I was not very busy and I thought it would be a good opportunity to have a look just curiosity. There was nothing in particular that took me up there. I did not hear Hunter remark anything about the ground. It was not in consequence of anything he said to me. I did not hear from anyone I simply went up out of idle curiosity. When I got there they were not working. One man was after letting his saw drop and he was after it and the other man was waiting till he came up for it. There was only one man at the top of the rise and the other at the bottom. Simpson at the top and McGrath at the bottom. That is all who were there

I went up the same way that the other sone did. I did not pass

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\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

him on the road. He came down and I went up. My reason for going up was to have a look at the workings. When I went up there was no work being done. I stayed there a minute or two before I heard the burst. I did not have time to say anything to the other man before the burst happened. I might have said a word to the man on top I think I remarked what was the noise alluding to the burst I said nothing before the noise. I was up there before the noise a minute or two. I had just stepped off the ladder on to the stage and I stayed there doing nothing and saying nothing. The next thing was the burst. I heard a noise something like thunder I have heard ground falling in a mine. It seemed a distance off. and I could not say at the time whether it was falling ground. I did not think it was thunder. I had no time to think much about it. I descended to No. 3 Rise and made my way as fast as I could in the dark. I could see nothing at No. 3 It was all in darkness there. The lights went out. I know very little about the workings I have heard it said that the ground was heavy. I heard that from different men in the mine. They said that the ground was crushing Before the accident it was about 3 weeks at the outside on and off. If the ground is heavy and crushing I cannot say whether it is dangerous. I have been mining three years and always on the plat. I should think it could not be too safe if it was heavy and crushing. When I heard the miners talking about it, I did not think they meant it was not too safe. I mean they did not say the words "not

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Coroner.)

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

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 VICTORIA, TO WIT. on h oath saith, I am a  
 residing at

\* Christian and  
 Surname in  
 full.

too safe" They said heavy and crushing. I would gather from that  
 that it was dangerous. I never heard anyone say that there was  
 danger of any sort. While the men were changing I heard them say  
 that the ground was going at different times.

Cross-examined -

I would not consider my opinion of much value as against Mansfield,  
 Adams and Simpson. The shoot I was in was No. 3 shoot. I did not  
 smoke. I expect I would have had a yarn if I had time. I have  
 never heard from any of the men since the accident that the heavy  
 ground caused the accident. only the water.

To the Jury - I never heard anything about the ground being heavy  
 on the night of the burst. I was on the bottom level all that  
 time. The trucker had made a start when I got there with his work  
 I heard nothing of any danger that was likely to arise.

Taken and Sworn before me the 17<sup>th</sup> day  
 of June 1907 at Ballarat

*W. D. Gibson*  
 Coroner.

(s.d.) James Hegarty

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* .Stephen O'Gorman

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Dana Street Ballarat

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I was on the afternoon shift on the 18th. March. I got below about 5 minutes past four. When I got below I went to No 2 shoot and went to work on the North blocking North off E~~a~~ West and there was another party at the back of us and we worked till 12 o'clock Everything was perfectly safe. There was no water in our face then we knocked off at 12 o'clock. The ground was not heavy there. It is the same as any other alluvial mine. The ground was heavy when we blocked it out just the same as any other alluvial mine. There was no difference to it and any other alluvial mine that I have worked in. I have worked 15 years in alluvial mines I have worked in a mine where it has been taken out and we worked between. I have worked in Allendale. It does not trouble us how it is taken out as long as we get our wages. We leave the question of safety to the Manager. If we thought there was danger and the Manager said there was no danger, I would ask him to go in and I might look in after. If I thought it was not safe I would pick my clothes up and go home. I never saw any danger in the Cardigan Mine anywhere while I was working there. I know nothing about the bursts of water. The bursts that have been there have not troubled me. I do not know where the burst that killed the men came from. I have formed an opinion it is that the shaft I was working in about half past 11 or 12 o'clock when we went into this strip - we saw it was not safe and we pulled the rails up and the ground was coming away from the left hand side of the strip and I saw white

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full.

washed boulders as if we were breaking into a new run of ground. I have told several that it had come from a fresh run altogether. That time might be a quarter to 11 or 12. It was not dangerous to see a new run of ground. Others saw it besides me. I never mentioned it to the next shift. I told Hunter that our strip was quite safe but the strip behind us was coming down and it would be just as well to wait awhile until it came down. I could see the strip coming down. It was coming down when we were leaving. He did not wait awhile. I told him to wait awhile because it is a custom of miners to tell their mates how it is. I told him to wait awhile on account of the ground going close to the shoot. It would be better for them on the level to wait on the level till it came in on account of the danger the same as any other time. There was no more danger there than at any other time only on account of being close to the shoot. The shoot was getting worked out. I know nothing about the previous inburst of water. We had no water trouble while I was there. I have heard Reports read. I do not know what to say about them. After the 28th. February there was some water coming out from the old blocking. There was not what you would call a large stream, nor large quantities of sand coming out.

Q. - Manager says "Blocked out ground came down bringing strong streams with large quantities of sand".

A. - I do not think it is true. We lost one shift through that.

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full.

We had to suspend working in consequence of the blocked out ground coming down. I lost one shift. It would be on the 29th. that I lost the shift from 4 o'clock in the afternoon till 12 at night. I was afternoon shift. The men who did come on told me they had to put a bigger pipe to carry water down the manhole. As soon as I saw the water I knew it must be coming out of the old blocking. I do not think there was any accumulation overhead. It might have come through the West drive.

Q. - The Manager says "I think it is a pool accumulated beneath the rock" ?

W2 A. - I do not think the burst of water was a <sup>pool</sup> burst of water  
W2 accumulating beneath the rock. <sup>Question:-</sup> (On the next day the Manager says "South West drive crushed a good bit" ? )

A. - I cannot say whether it was through the water. I was not working there.

Q. - The Manager reports March 5th. "Water troublesome" same on the 6th. "Ground heavy water still troublesome".

A. - I do not agree with that. The ground was not exceedingly heavy. There was no great difficulty in keeping it open.

Q. - The Manager reports "found it impossible to keep it open".

A. - I cannot say that it is true. He was not compelled to abandon it. It cannot be true then, it was not impossible to keep it open, if he put enough timber into it. On that day I never saw pieces of rock coming away with the sand. I never heard anything

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about it.

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residing at .....

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

Q. - On that day the Manager was of opinion that the rock had given way, which would account for the ground being so heavy ?

A. - I do not agree with that because I have not seen anything to justify an opinion of that sort. There was some sand coming out but nothing to trouble us. I had to do with the barricading of the inner workings. That was to keep the ground from dragging and the timber from breaking.

Q. - The Manager says "Drive in a bad state had to put stacks in"

A. - As the ground was getting worked back it was getting in a bad state and the timbers were put in to keep it solid.

Q. - The Manager says in his reports of March 12, 14th. and 17th "water still troublesome".

A. - I do not remember those dates at all. We did not notice those little things. As far as I was concerned there was no water trouble.

Q. - The Manager says on March 14th. "water still troublesome water finding its way over the main drive, faster than we can block it out". What does that mean ?

A. - I do not remember any water coming over the back in the West drive. On the day before the accident, Mansfield's shift was repairing shoot. It was not caused by the water washing away the sand. It was because the shoot was getting worked out. It must be repaired when the shoot is getting worked out. The closer you get to the shoot the heavier it is getting round the shoot. I

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full.

cannot give any opinion about the Manager's reports. They are not true in my opinion. The only reason I can give is that we used to have to clean up a truck or two of sand. I was never told by the Manager of any danger overhead. If a pool had accumulated overhead, I would consider there was danger.

Q. - The Manager said "that the bursts came from a pool overhead"

A. - He never told me about it.

Q. - He also said the the rocks broke away ?

A. - That would cause danger in my opinion. He never told me.

He need not have told me about it as I saw the rock where I was working. If he had told me I would have taken no notice because I saw it myself. I do not know the date. I did not go in with the other men and show them the place when I told them to wait.

Cross-examined -

When I discovered what appeared to be a change in the wash there was water coming out of the face. There was a change in the character of the wash we had been working. The wash we were in previous was tight, but the wash we broke into was loose. There was a lot of sand and big white boulders that we had not seen before Mr. Harris was not down below then. I would not go into the place if I considered there was any danger. In my opinion there was no danger. So far as the Mining Manager's reports are concerned, when a man is working in a mine the water causes some trouble to work in.

I consider it is the Mining Manager's duty to work his mine as

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economically as possible. If we would get a dry strip we would work it as fast as we could.

Re-examined -

I had no idea of any danger, that night when I left. nothing unusual. If I had formed an opinion that the rock had broken overhead, I would have considered it dangerous or that a pool of water was formed overhead I would consider that dangerous. If that was the Manager's opinion, he never communicated it to me nor to the men who got killed.

Re-cross-examined -

I do not know whether he communicated it to the men who got killed. To the Jury - I explained to my mate about the strip coming down because it was the usual thing. He used to relieve me and it was quiet and the Manager gave us orders to keep the strip up 4 feet 6 inches high. It had to be backed off and centred. I told him that our strip was quiet and the strip behind was coming down and that they have pulled up the rails and had put in diagonal stays to keep it up. I think the Boss of the shift knew about it. I told James Hunter and John Hunter the same. I always did tell him how the ground was as we were coming away. There was water coming from the wash where the big boulders were got.

To Mr. Barrett - When we were taking up the rails I took O'Brien and we pulled the rails up and we went in to see where the water

was coming from. We found it was coming from the left hand side

Taken and Sworn before me the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the solid strip out of the pug.

of June 1902 at Ballarat

*W. D. C. B. S.*

*PN*

Coroner.

(signed) S O Gorman

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* John O'Brien

on his oath saith, I am a Miner

residing at Cardigan

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full

I was on the shift with the last Witness O'Gorman. I had been working there two years I think. I have been mining 10 years. I have heard the evidence of the last witness. During the 2 years I was working there I had no water trouble. I was employed as bracedman for about 12 months for the first 2 years. and I joined a tribute party. There was only 3 men on each shift below. I opened the reef drive and drove to No 1 shoot and rose that and went to work on the brace again. It was not turning out too good and I left it. and I came back a couple of months after and No. 1 shoot was opened up and I went myself with John O'Keefe and drove the reef and rose No. 2. I worked there only about two months before the disaster. I did not think it was going to pay the tributors. and I was one of the tributors who left it. When it went on contract I saw the Manager and he gave me a start on wages. I was working with the shift Boss Hall. I was afternoon shift on the 18th March. When I left at midnight the strip I was working had started to come down. That would be the strip going West alongside the main drive. The angle of the pug wall should have cut across the strip that we were working in. and should have left us 4 feet of wash on the main drive. Our blocking caps were getting shorter every set we were getting in. and up to about 10 o'clock that night things were alright. The water started to squeeze through on the left hand side of the strip in the solid pug and about 10 o'clock I pulled some of the pug off

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residing at.....

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and there was a heap of stones - white boulders - and sand in it and water coming from it. My mate was at the truck. I invited Richards to see the affair. I asked them their opinion about it. They came in and they did not know what to think about it. Sand started to run from about 11 o'clock and the strips-~~staretd~~ started to break a good bit. The shift Boss thought it was hardly safe for us to work in. He had to go to No. 3 shoot if we risked it and he gave us orders to center the strip. It was safe to centre it but not to put up any further ahead. O'Gorman came with me and we centred it and put in 2 centres and we put 2 long caps against the gaps and Hall went on top as we thought to get some firewood to build a stack so that we could bring the firewood along and open out and leave it stand. There was a bit of a mistake about it at the time, on account of my clothes resembling the shift Boss's clothes and he asked me to go and get my mates clothes and I listened and I thought the ground was giving way and I had a look in and there was sand coming into the strip out of the pug. They were ahead of me and of course I came down and followed them. We met the other shift at the shaft. As a rule we knocked off so as to get to the shaft at 12 o'clock. It was about a quarter to 12 at this time and I was at the top of the balance shaft. I met McGrath and James Hunter and O'Gorman was speaking to him as he was in his crowd and he was telling him it was just as well to wait now and give them a hand up with the firewood as to go up there

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Coroner.)

*But*



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residing at

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full

with the strip coming down and he said you cant do anything till you build a horse. I told him that I thought things were not too safe that there was water coming from the pug and running into the truck. and that the best thing was to wait till the Boss came and get the firewood to build it up. Then I went up ~~to the~~ shaft. I knew about previous outbursts of water on 28th. February I never formed an opinion that any pool accumulated overhead. If a pool accumulated overhead I would not work there. If I formed an opinion that the rock had tapered out or was broken I would look at the ground and see how the ground was standing. I recollect the blocked out ground coming down on the 28th. February. If the Manager says "blocked out ground came down bringing strong streams with large quantities of sand" I think I can agree with that. I think on that date there were about 3 parties of men working up No 2 shoot. I think it would be 3 weeks previous to the disaster. I think there were 3 parties in the shoot and there were 2 parties besides. Steve Hall and I were sent below as <sup>the</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> launder was not big enough to take the water and the water was running into the shoot. and they could not get the dirt out of the shoot. We were sent below to put in pipes. We put in 8 inch pipes and we took out the 6 inch ones. That would be the strong stream that was reported. It had been running 8 hours from the time it happened until I went on. The 8 inch pipe was enough to take it away but that was about the principal part of the outburst which got away. I think you

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would call anything a burst of water if it came out suddenly. I did not see it. I think that probably it is correct that the water came in No. 3 drive and the water was increasing. I cannot tell what quantity of water was running down the pipes. If a pool had accumulated beneath the rock I never heard anything about it I would not have gone into it if I heard that.

Q. - Manager says " Next day the South West drive crushed a good bit owing to the water coming away North".

A. - The South West was crushed. The water was coming under the drive. I do not know whether it was the water crushing it or not. We put the pipes in on the 28th. February. It would have no effect on the water in the main drive.

Q. - Manager says " water broke away over the main drive".

A. - As far as I can remember it the water was coming out of the side of the drive near the No. 1 crosscuts. I never saw any water coming over the back. I do not know anything about the reports It is only what I have seen. On March 6th. the ground was heavy. I did not know that it was compulsory to abandon the blocks. The ground could have been kept open in my opinion. I never saw pieces of rock coming away with sand. On the last shift that I worked Richards told me to go and look at some rock where the ground came down. I never went to look at it. I did not think it was worth while.

Q. - Manager said "am strongly of opinion that the rock has given

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way on account of the ground being so heavy".

A. - I never heard that from him. I do not think I would have gone in if I did. I would have looked at the ground and used my not

own judgment. I would have gone in and gone on with my work if the rock broke overhead. Mr Harris never told me anything about that.

Cross-examined - O'Keefe never indicated to me that he was afraid of the ground and I and he were mates. My theory as to the inburst was that it was a new run of country. That the water came from the South side. There was a change in the wash altogether It was white wash and loose boulders. Mr. Harris never had an opportunity of saying that altogether.

Re-examined -

Q. - Do you agree with the Mining Manager's opinion at all ?

A. - I go by the water coming out of the new country. I say the water was getting the start and it cut the water off that was coming out of that ground and about the same stream that was running down the 8 inch launder when I left. The water was coming through where we could have had nothing but pug. About three feet from there the wash used to be sand. When I left the water was coming strong from this sand. I suppose the stream would make half an inch of the launder. If it was water that was over the back there was a fall of ground about five shifts previous to that and Richards if

invited me to see the rock and I thought that it was water that was

in the back it would have come away then. The opening was there and

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you could see where they were blocking. The opening was there for the water to come if the water was over the back. I think the sand that came out may have come from the small bit of country that I was in. That is my opinion.

To the Jury - I was the last to leave the blocking strips. I mean by the pug.

Q. - What was the soft reef that you had on your right hand side when you came across the wash. ?

A. - There were 2 pug walls that ran on the North and South side of the gutter. How high I do not know.

Q. - How high was the <sup>main</sup> wash from where you struck the wash where there was a good bit of sand running from it ?

A. - I do not know whether the reef had bumped up on the wash. I was working about the wash and I never saw any sand of that description before.

Adjourned till 11 o'clock Wednesday.

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

of June 1902 at Ballaarat

W. D. C. B. O. W.  
Coroner.

(signed) J. O'Brien

B.P.



# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* William Noble

on his oath saith, I am an Engine Driver

residing at Allendale

\* Christian and Surname in full.

Wednesday 18th. June -

I was in charge of the Cardigan Mine from the 8th. April 1900 to September 1901. I was the registered Mining Manager to the Company During my time a considerable amount of work was done. It was ordinary alluvial ground worked in the East and portion of the mine for a term and then we opened out the intermediate level and drove 400 feet and rose to No. 1 shoot into the wash.

(Witness here referred to the plan showing balance shaft) We started from the top of the balance shaft and drove the intermediate to No 1 shoot rose up into the wash and then drove across cut and blocked out the ground. About that time I was relieved from my duties as Manager and Mr. Harris took my place. There was a drive stopped to block the ground back. It was the last of the main wash dirt drive. We got as far as the head of the main drive and the reef drive was driving 100 feet. ~~to~~ No. 2 shoot was not risen - we could not rise it up to continue the work. It was to be blocked out while the No. 2 was being driven. Witness then referred to the plan of the lease. - We drove and blocked out ground on the Eastern side of the shaft. After that was finished we turned ~~out~~ our attention to the Western ground and let it on tribute to Simpson and party and they drove on under my supervision During the time I supervised the work it was an ordinary alluvial gutter ground. I had no trouble with the water whatever. The water coming from it would go about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  strokes from the ground in

Taken and Sworn before me the ..... day  
of ..... 190 at .....  
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.

the East end but the coming water from the West end would not be a half a stroke on the pumps. But we had some rock water in the shaft that made the strokes five strokes on the average. The reef was of a swelling nature. A good deal of blocking was done in my time. When the blocking came down the rock would be visible for 10 feet over the back laths in two or three places. I have seen the rock myself. No water of any consequence came away.

Cross-examined -

drained

*W.D.* I assume that the deeper workings on the East have ~~drawn~~ the Western workings. I was of that opinion seeing that there was no water in the high ground as we went up. I never anticipated danger from water in the high ground. I have worked in alluvial mines when I was young in the Cardigan, I was underground there. In the alluvial mines I have heard that they have frequently bursts of water.

To the Coroner - I considered it a safe reef to work. None of the men ever complained to me that it was dangerous.

To Mr. Barrett - I had nothing to do with the Western workings where the accident occurred. I have done a great deal of work in the Cardigan.

Mr. Barrett read Reports -

Q. - Did you have anything like what is mentioned in the Report of February 28 th. at any time when you were Manager ? Blocked out ground coming down bringing large quantities of stone, water

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

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increasing, suspended work as water too much and is running into dirt shoot .

A. - We had nothing like that.

Q. - "Think a pool accumulated beneath the rock, pumps increased 8 strokes per minute".

A. - We had nothing like that in my time.

Q. - Manager says March 1st. "considerable amount of sand causing a lot of trouble. South West drive crushed a good bit owing to the water coming away from the No. 3 North and finding vent in the main drive".

A. - There was nothing like that when I was there. There was no water to trouble us. We did not have to caulk the drives and keep the sand back.

Q. - Manager says on 5th. March - "water still troublesome"

A. - There was no water to trouble us when I was there.

Q. - Manager says on 6th. March - "compelled to abandon blocks and pieces of rock coming away with sand".

A. - We have not had that. We have not had abandoned blocks. We have had to cut drives open only.

Q. - The other Reports refer to the water being troublesome. Did you have anything like that ?

A. - No, we had nothing like that.

Re-cross-examined by Mr. Clarke -

If I had any experience of this I would not regard it as any danger

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# CORONER'S INQUEST.

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unless it actually stopped the men going below. If the water did not increase the water on the plat, I should think it of no importance and of no danger.

To Mr. Barrett -

Q. - If the water had accumulated overhead, would the question of how much it came up on the plat have affected the question of danger?

A. - I should like to be there and see before I formed an opinion. If the water got vent it would cause a smash.

Taken and Sworn before me the 18th day  
of June 1902 at Ballarat

*W. Deane*

Coroner.

(sd) William Noble

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*PM* 136



## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* Josiah Skewes

on his oath saith, I am a Mining Manager

residing at Beaufort

\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

I am at present managing the Sons of Freedom Central at Raglan.

I was first occupied at the Cardigan mine in November 1898 as

Mining Manager. I was managing 18 months up to April 1900. When

I took charge I commenced at the No 1 shoot in the East drive.

I am speaking of the Eastern workings. That was the commencement of my operations in the mine and we had continued to the West then.

No. 1 shoot is driven North for a considerable distance and I

opened and went West of it. The part that is painted part yellow

and part blue was driven in my time. I intersected a run of wash

when driving that and I followed it up. That is a high drive.

When we found the high drive there we opened on the other side of

the shaft and put up a balance shaft and put up a shoot which is

27 feet I think from the balance shaft and continued to work the

ground from the balance shaft to the Western drive. It was all

blocked out in my time. (Witness referred to plan and pointed

out his workings). The point where I ceased working was due West

from the shaft. During the whole time I was there I had no trouble

with the water. The pumps were going about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  strokes, there was

no water overhead in the Western ground. It was very dry ground.

Ordinary alluvial dry ground. I have heard reports read to Mr.

Noble and during the time I was Manager I had nothing like that.

I had no water at all in that end of the mine. We had a little in

the East end in the deep ground but nothing that any experienced

man would take any notice of. We have no strong streams coming

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Coroner.)

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## CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

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full.

away with sand, or bursts. We did not have to abandon any blocks in consequence of anything. If I was under the impression there was an accumulation overhead, I do not think I would have let the men go on blocking. I think I would have located it. <sup>Cross-examined -</sup> If I fancied there had been slight accumulation of water overhead and there had been a burst which carried it away, I would let the men go on to work, if I thought it was all gone. If I thought it came from a pool on the rock and this burst had gone away I would let the men go to work. I would not consider they were in any danger I have had 34 years experience in mines. I have worked in the Duke and Timor and Chalk's Junction about the wettest mines in the state. I experienced many bursts of sand there. We used to take it as nothing. We had two <sup>pumps -</sup> 22 and 18 inch pumps. That would be 8 strokes a minute. The ~~two~~ 22 inch was on 8 foot stroke and the 18 inch on a 7 foot stroke. I have come out with the water up to my neck. I have seen us clean sand for a fortnight at a time. We did not regard it as any danger whatever. The increase of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  strokes on the pumps would be nothing. We often got that in an alluvial mine. It is very often a poor look out for a mine if they do not get it. I would not regard it of any importance if the water did not increase on the plat. I would not dream of communicating it to the Inspector.

Re-examined. -

If there was a pool overhead and it emptied itself or stopped

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running it would be quite possible for the vent to be blocked and the water accumulated again. If I thought there was a pool overhead and if the water had gone put I would make some investigation before I would allow the men to go on blocking. There is a certain amount of danger if there is a pool overhead which empties getting blocked and filling again. If I thought there was a country pool overhead it would depend on the nature of the country what I would do - as far as I knew about the country there was nothing treacherous when I was there. I have heard there were two rocks in the shaft and I heard that there was a rock more in the shaft than in the bore. I have got no proof of it if they say so, one rock must have disappeared. I would not take any precautions in a dry lead if that happened. If I got into where it was wet and we got water, I would only bore for the water or something of that sort. I would take some means to find out. If I went up or down it would make a good deal of difference. When you are going up a lead you are generally going towards the end of it. When I was going to the West I was going towards the dry end. and going towards the shallow diggings. If they were going into the dry ground and bursts came on I think it was an unforeseen thing to the Manager. As far as I understand there was never any such thing expected to be found there. The Manager says in his report of December 20th. "fair streams of water coming out of the drive which requires face boards as ground looser than usual" and on the

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