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PROCEEDINGS of INQUEST
held upon the body of

Alfred Ernest Bennett

at

South Bury

Received at the Crown Law Offices,

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Coroner.

MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

VICTORIA,
Central BAILLIWICK,
 To wit.

A MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY on behalf of Our Sovereign *Lord King* ~~Lady~~ the ~~Queen~~
 taken at *South Bunyip* in the *Central*
 Bailiwick of Victoria, this *Seventeenth* day of *June*
 in the year of our Lord One thousand *nine* ~~eight~~ hundred and ~~ninety~~ *one* before
 the undersigned *John Bell* Esquire, one of
 Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said Bailiwick, upon view of
 the body of *Alfred Ernest Duncan*
 then and there lying dead.

Having duly inquired when, where, how, and by what means the said
Alfred Ernest Duncan came by his
 death, I say that the said *Alfred Ernest Duncan*
 died at *South Bunyip* in the said
 Bailiwick on the *14th* day of *June* *1891*
 from *Accidental death from drowning*
(while attempting to rescue his sister)
Janet Hilda Duncan from drowning.

As witness my hand this

day of

June

17th
1891

John Bell

J.P.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent *

on his oath saith, I am a

residing at

* Christian and
Surname in
full.

I am the father of the boy Alfred Ernest Duncan now deceased: his age is Ten years and nine months.

At 8 am on the 14th June 1901 I saw the deceased getting ready to go to school to South Bunyip a distance of two miles. The road to the school is along the main drain on the South side and the school is on the north side. The drain could be crossed at either the fifteen mile bridge or the Thirteen mile bridge. They had their own choice of which bridge they should cross.

He was accompanied by his sisters "Jane Hilda and Annie Maud Duncan" about twenty minutes to ten same morning I heard that one of my children had fallen into the main drain and was drowned. I went to the place near the school and then heard that the two children Alfred Ernest and Jane Hilda were both drowned.

At about 12²⁰ pm on the 15th Inst. I saw my son Alfred Ernest taken out of the main drain at the Thirteen mile seventy chain bridge. he was then dead.

Taken and Sworn before me the 14th day
of June 1891 at Bunyip South
John Bell I.P.
Coroner.

John Duncan

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent *

Meta Norton

on her oath saith, I am a

residing at

Bungay South with my parents

* Christian and
Surname in
full.

I remember Friday the 14th June^{inst} I was going to school on that morning at about 8.30 am I met Janie Duncan her sister Annie we were on the South side of the drain the brother Alfred Ernest Duncan and my brother Noel were there. my brother Paul and Alfred Ernest Duncan crossed the creamery bridge on to the north side of the drain we remained on the south side of the drain we walked along the road till we came to the plank which was across the stream in front of Costello's. Janie Duncan said I will go across the plank will you come with me I said alright she stepped on to the plank and went back on to the bank. I then walked across she said come back and catch hold of my hand I walked back and caught hold of her hand and started to walk across when we got ~~on~~ to the middle of the plank she pulled me and let go her hand and she fell into the

Taken and Sworn before me the

day

of

189

at

Coroner.

VICTORIAN POLICE-[74B.]

Name of Witness.

Statement.

the water she screamed I then went up on to the road to Mr. Bidden. I told Mr. Bidden I then went back to the drain. I saw decesses floating on top of the water. Alfred Ernest Duncanson (deceased) was then in the water down stream below his sister.

He caught hold of his sister. I then ran on to the school to tell the master I did not see either of them again after that.

While I was walking across the plank I had hold of deceased's hand we walked side ways we were not pushing each other or playing. I think deceased got giddy from looking at the water. I could not say whether "Annie" had hold of her sister's hand when we started to walk over the plank.

Meta Norton

Taken and sworn before me the 17 day of June 1901 at Bunyip South.

John Bell

J.P.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent *

on his oath saith, I am a

residing at

* Christian and
Surname in
full.

Saith I am 11 years of age and reside with my parents About 9 am on the 14th Inst (on Friday) I was going from the Post Office at South Bunyip to the School on the north side of the main Drain and I caught up to Emie Duncan (the deceased) We walked along together till we came to the plank which was across the stream in front of Mr Castello's His sister Jane put her foot on the plank (she was then on the south side of the drain) deceased said to her are you going across she said yes He said you can go across if you like she then stepped on to the plank and walked a few feet and turned back and said I will not go across, At this time Mabel Norton had walked across the plank. Mabel Norton walked back across the plank, Jane (deceased) caught hold of her hand, and Jane (deceased) caught hold of her sister Annie's hand they were then on the plank Mabel Norton was heading after they

Taken and Sworn before me the _____ day
of _____ 189 at _____
Coroner.

VICTORIAN POLICE-[74B.]

Name of Witness.

Statement.

had gone about four feet across the stream Annie Duncan started to cry. Jane (deceased) let go her hand and she walked back and got up on the bank when Jane got in the middle of the stream she fell off the plank. She seemed to have got frightened and overbalanced and fell in to the water. Her brother Alfred James called out to her sister lay on your back. I then ran to Mr. Brett for help when I returned with Mr. Brett Alfred James Duncan (deceased) was in the water. He had hold of his sister around the waist trying to hold her up out of the water. He let her go and tried to get out. He was about six feet off the side when he sank (that would be about a chain and a half from Mr. Brett's plank). I ran along the bank for about 10 chains I saw Mr. Kelly on the south side of the bank I said Annie Duncan and

VICTORIAN POLICE-[74B.]

Name of Witness.

Statement.

and Jack Duncan are in the
drain and by his direction I
ran on to the bridge to tell
some men who were working
there to keep a look out for
the bodies. That would be
about 26 Chain from where
the girl fell into the water.

The three girls had hold of hands
and were walking sideways
there was no pushing or playing

After I returned from Mr. Costello's
I picked up a piece of tree
on the bank and went down
close to the water and held
it out to Eric & I touched
his hand with it but he
seemed not to be able catch
hold of it. He had let his
sister go at this time.

John Rushton Woods.

Taken and sworn before me the 17 day
June 1901 at Bungip South.

John Bell

J.P.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent *

Annie Maud Duncan

on her oath saith, I am a

residing at

Bunyip South with my parents

* Christian and
Surname in
full.

I am 7 years of age and reside with my parents at Bunyip South. I remember last Friday. I started from home for school & my brother Alfred Ernest and my sister Jane were with me. When we got to the Creamery bridge we met Mabel Norton and Joel Norton. My brother Alfred Ernest and Joel Norton crossed the Creamery bridge to the north side of the drain. We kept on the south side. When we came to the plank across the drain in front of Bristello's my sister Jane said to Mabel Norton will you go across the plank Mabel Norton said yes she walked across my brother who was on the opposite side of the drain said to my sister Jane you can come across if you like. Mabel Norton came back to where my sister was caught hold of her hand when they reached the middle of the drain Mabel Norton let go my sister's hand she seemed to get giddy and fell into the

Taken and Sworn before me the

day

of

189

at

Coroner.

VICTORIAN POLICE-[74B.]

Name of Witness.

Statement.

The water. my brother alfred
 Ernest ^(deceased) who was on the opposite
 side of the bank jumped into
 the water caught hold of my
 sister and tried to get her
 out but could not. He then
 let my sister go and tried to
 get out himself. The boy John
 Woods picked up a stick
 ran down to the edge of
 the water and held it out
 to my brother the stick touched
 him but he did not catch
 hold of it. I ran along the
 bank to Mr Kelly's and said to
 him Jane and Annie in the
 drain we ran back to the
 water but could not see him.

we never walked across the
 plank in front of Costello's before.

I started to walk the plank first
 but got frightened and came back
 Maebel Norton then walked across
 herself I am not sure whether
 I had hold of my sister Jane's
 hand. when she started to walk
 the plank with Maebel Norton.

Annie M. Duncan

Taken and sworn before me the 17 day of June 1901
 at Bungip South John Bell JP

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent *

on his oath saith, I am a

residing at

James Wellwood

Police Constable

Dorwin

* Christian and
Surname in
full.

on the 14th instant I received a report
of a case of drowning in the main
Drain Bungip South I proceeded there
in company with Constable Ryan of
Longwarry while dragging the drain
on the 15th instant I heard a call
that a body had been recovered by
shore working in the boat a short
distance up stream I proceeded to
the spot at the bridge opposite the
State School I assisted to take the
body of deceased out of the water
and conveyed it to the State School
and assisted to remove the clothing
I examined the body but found no
marks on it violence on it.

J. Wellwood
M. J. 384

Taken and Sworn before me the 17th day
of June 1891 at Bungip South
John Bell J.P.
Coroner.