

1603

20th. December 1937.

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*PROCEEDINGS of INQUEST*

*held upon the body of*

NEWLY BORN MALE CHILD, NAME UNKNOWN

at Melbourne Morgue.

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*Received at the Crown Law Offices,*

21 DEC 1937

19

*J.P.*

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A.C. Tingate Coroner

**INQUISITION.**

VICTORIA }  
TO WIT. }

*MS* AN INQUISITION for our Sovereign Lord King <sup>George VI.</sup> ~~Edward VIII~~, taken at  
The Morgue, Melbourne, in the State of Victoria, the 20th.  
day of December A.D. 1937 in the Second  
year of the reign of our said Lord the King, by me, Arthur Coyte Tingate,  
gentleman, a Coroner of our Lord the King for the said State, upon the view  
*MS* of the body of a newly born male child, <sup>unknown</sup> name/then and there lying dead.

Having inquired upon the part of our Lord the King when, where, and  
how and by what means the said newly born male child, name unknown

(1) His or her.

came by<sup>(1)</sup> his death, I say that

on the 4th. day of November 1937

~~at~~ on the south bank of the River Yarra at Princes Bridge, South  
Melbourne

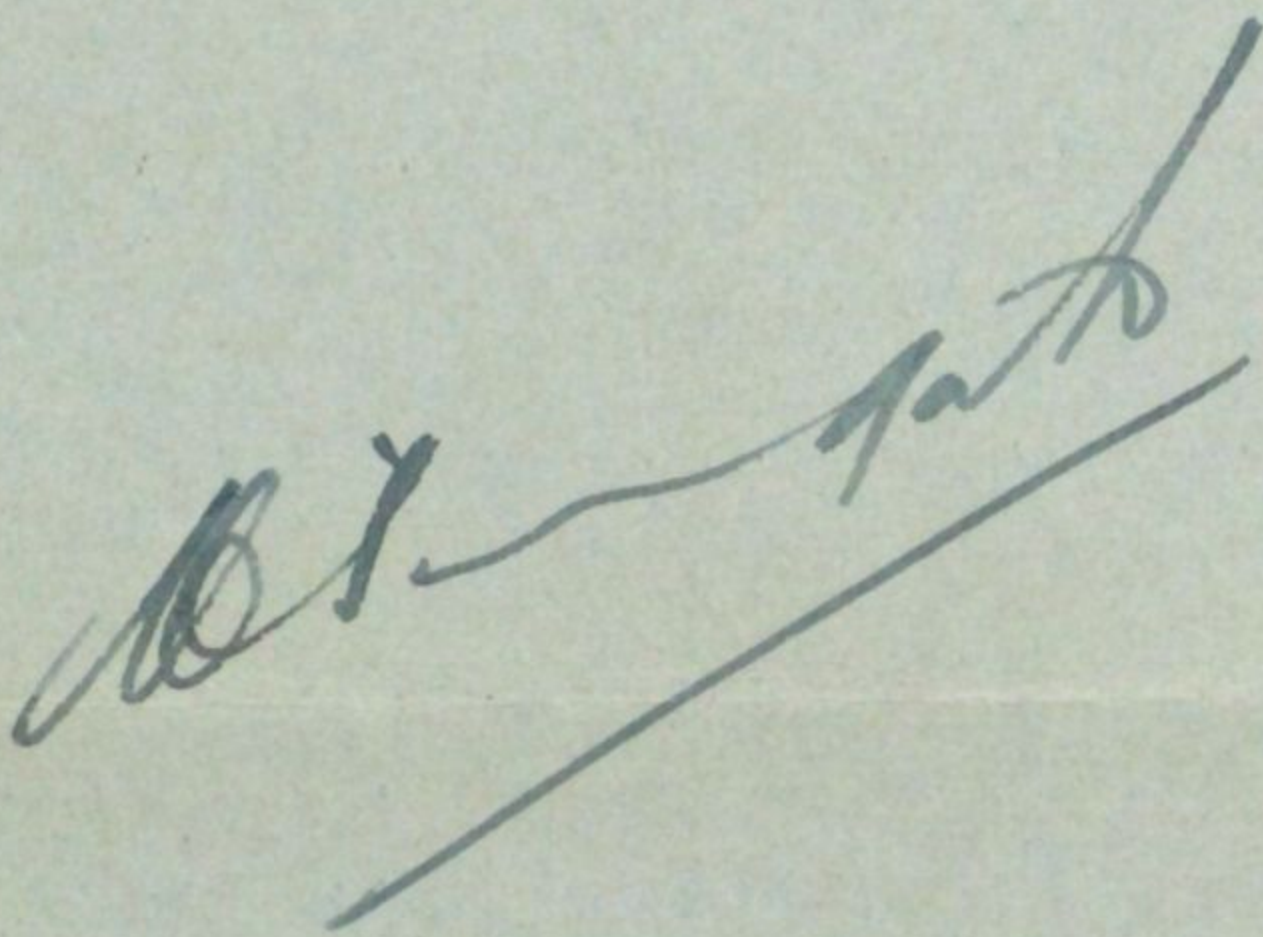
in the said State, the said newly born male child, name unknown, was  
found dead, having

(2) Here state cause of death, if known; if unknown, doubtful, or no evidence, state the fact accordingly.

died from<sup>(2)</sup> *asphyxia caused by being wilfully and maliciously suffocated by some person or persons to me unknown. and I further say that in the manner aforesaid such person or persons murdered the said child*

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

hand this 20th. day of December A.D. 19 37.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. J. ...', written over a horizontal line.

Coroner.

Sergeant Gilbert appeared to assist the Coroner.

VICTORIA POLICE—47.

T.C. Branch.

Russell Street

Station

Melbourne

Police District

4-II- 19 37

*P.M. 64  
Coroner*

*4. 11. 37*

*Inquest  
Coroner*

*5. 11. 37.*

REPORT of M. Michell. Const 9055.

Relative to Finding dead body of male child in the Yarra River.

Coroner,  
City Morgue,

1 I have to report that on the 4-II-37 at 11-15 am I was on duty at the intersection of Batman Avenue and Swanston Street where my attention was drawn to what appeared to be a bed sheet with something wrapped in it, lying on the South Side of the Yarra River, about 6 yards West from Princes Bridge, where it had apparently been deposited by the falling tide.

2 On investigating I found that the sheet was wrapped around the dead body of a male child, newly born. The body did not appear to have been long in the water.

3 I removed the body to the City Morgue.

This report was forwarded to the C.I. Branch

*M. Michell.*

Const 9055.

## DEPOSITION OF A WITNESS.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent \*

*Ralph John Wright-Smith*on h /s oath saith, I am a *legally qualified medical practitioner*residing at *162 Kooyong Road, Caulfield.*\* Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

On 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1937, at the City Morgue, Melbourne, I made a post-mortem examination on the body of a newborn male infant. The body was wrapped in bloodstained wet sheeting. The body was nineteen inches in length and five pounds eight ounces in weight. The umbilical cord was pale moist and torn twelve inches from the body. The placenta and membranes were present. Vernix was present with some recent blood. The mouth was open and the lips were swollen. There were no external marks of violence. There was no post-mortem staining or rigor mortis. The finger nails reached the finger tips. A bony nucleus was just visible at the lower end of the thigh bone. The pericardium showed numerous recent haemorrhages. The heart muscle was dark and firm. The cavities were dilated and contained dark fluid blood. The valves, coronary arteries and aorta were normal. The thymus was congested and showed numerous recent haemorrhages. In the pharynx behind the tongue was a large piece of rag which had been forced down into the glottis causing complete obstruction. The air passages contained some froth. The surface of the lungs showed numerous recent haemorrhages. The lungs were large air containing and floated whole and in parts. They were fully expanded. The liver, spleen and kidneys were congested. The upper part of the gullet was blocked by rag. The stomach contained a little air and mucus. The large intestine was filled with meconium. The suprarenals were congested. The pancreas and genital organs were normal. The skull bones showed no injury. The brain and its membranes were congested.

The child was an almost full time one and had breathed.

Death was due to asphyxia from suffocation.

I can not say how long the child had lived after birth. To the Coroner;—  
The rag had been pushed hard into the throat.

*Ralph John Wright-Smith*

Taken and sworn before me the 20<sup>th</sup> day  
of December 1937 at Melbourne

*[Signature]*  
Coroner.

**DEPOSITION OF A WITNESS.**

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent \* MELVILLE MICHELL

on h I Soath saith, I am a CONSTABLE OF POLICE

\* Christian and Surname in full.

~~residing at~~ STATIONED AT RUSSELL STREET MELB URNE

At 11.15.a.m. on the 4th of November 1937 I was on traffic duty at the intersection of Swanston Street and Batman Avenue where I noticed a parcel on the south west side of Princes Bridge near the edge of the water of the Yarra River. I investigated and found that the parcel was a new linen sheet wrapped around the dead body of a newly born male child. The spot where I found the body is 3 yards west from the south side of Princes Bridge and about 4 feet north of the stone wall which runs parallel with the river. There is a drop of 15 feet from the top of the stone wall to the water of the river. When I found the body it was lying in the mud near the edge of the water the tide was out and it appeared to have been left by the falling tide. I immediately conveyed the dead body to the City Morgue.

*M. Michell  
Const. 9055*

Taken and sworn before me the 20th. day  
of December 1937 at Melbourne.

*[Signature]*  
Coroner.

DEPOSITION OF A WITNESS.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent \* HUGH RUPERT DONNELLY

on h IS oath saith, I am a DETECTIVE

\* Christian and Surname in full.

~~RESIDING~~ STATIONED AT MELBOURNE

Senior Detective Webster and I made inquiries into the death of this child. We made a most careful examination of the sheet in which the body was wrapped when found for marks of a distinctive nature, but the only one found was the name "Hardwear"<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inquiries showed this was the makers name of the sheeting which was a type sold by Paynes Bon Marche Bourke Street Melbourne. Inquiries disclosed that about 1000 of such sheets had for some time previously been sold weekly. We also caused inquiries to be made at all Public and Private Hospitals and from all Doctors in the City and Suburbs for any women who may have called for medical attention following child birth but without result. We have been unable to ascertain whether the body came down the river with the current or whether it was thrown in where it was found. Up to the present we have failed to trace the mother of the child or the person responsible for its death

*H. R. Donnelly.*  
*Detective 9740*

Taken and sworn before me the 20th. day  
of December 1937 at Melbourne.

*[Handwritten signature]*

Coroner.