

Hugh Sinclair Coroners Inquest

No. 6-2341
15.11.71
Coroner
Hutt
11/2895
Surg. P.M.

COLONY OF
NEW ZEALAND,
TO WIT.

INFORMATIONS of WITNESSES severally taken and acknowledged on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, touching the death of Hugh Sinclair at the dwelling-house of Walter Sinclair known by the name of Wairimu-o-mata, in the Province of Wellington in the Colony above-mentioned, on Monday the thirteenth day of November One thousand eight hundred and seventy-one before J. G. Ford, Wilford one of the Coroners for the said Colony, on a Inquisition then and there taken on view of the body of Hugh Sinclair then and there lying dead, as follows, to wit:—

18/11/71
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Thomas William Bourne ^{being sworn} saith that
at a quarter to seven on Friday
evening I accompanied deceased
across the river in Hutt river
in the punt, he stopped five
minutes at Whitewoods Hotel
where he purchased a bottle
of brandy, which he strapped
round his waist, I walked
with him some distance down
the Wairimu road, talking about
some business, deceased was
in his usual health, he had
had a short trip

quite able to ride, and talked quite rationally on business matters; he had half a glass of brandy at Whitewoods, he had been to town and was then returning, he did not remain in the built more than about a quarter of an hour, he did not call at Valentines. It was then fine weather; about half an hour after it began to rain and blow from the south-east.

^{the forenoon.} When Mr. Sinclair left me I considered him quite capable of taking care of himself.

Thos. M. Brown.

Hurton Campbell being sworn saith that on Friday night & November 10th. between eight and nine o'clock, I was on the Wainui-road, on the Wainui side of the hill, when I saw deceased coming home, he was on horseback, he ~~was~~ asked me to have a glass of brandy, he had an unopened bottle with him, I went into my house which is on the road-side taking the bottle with me and helped myself to a glass, when I came back I asked him if he

as not going to have a glass
he bid me brew him a cup,
which I did, I poured some
out into the cup, part of
which he drank and part he
threw in the road. He then
began to talk business, referring
to road-making, timber &c.
He talked quite sensibly. —
He talked for about ten or
fifteen minutes, he then got
me to get a bit of flax to
tie the bottle in his pocket
which I did; he then went
off home at a trot. —

As far as drink was concerned
I considered him well able to
take care of himself. —

The place where I left him was
about a mile from where he
was found. —

It was then raining. —

By a juror, because made no complaint
of any kind. —

because was not sober nor
yet was he drunk. —

Huston's case

William Wakeham being sworn saith
that on Saturday November 11th
I was going along the road
near the black bridge in the
Waimai when I noticed a
horse with saddle & bridle
on, on the road, on coming
up I noticed deceased lying
on his right side about
two yards from the road
with his feet towards the
road; deceased's hat was on
the road about half a dozen
yards from where he lay.
There was no mud upon his
clothes or face, the roads were
very dirty. His pocket hand-
kerchief was between him &
his hat; I saw the I immediately
went to inform Mr Norris
and then of the occurrence.
The bridle rein was trailing
in the road.

William Wakeham

John M. Kivide being sworn saith
that on Saturday morning, Nov. 11th
between nine & ten O'clock I was
called by last witness, who in-
formed me that he had found
deceased lying dead near the
black man bridge. I went to the
spot, I found deceased lying
on his right side, right arm
under his head, left arm ~~was~~
across his stomach; deceased
lay about ten feet from the
road, his hat was on the
ground in front of him & his
pocket handkerchief behind
him. I saw no mark of a fall
upon him, nor did I notice any
mark upon his face hands
or any part of his clothes, his
clothes were thoroughly soaked
with the rain; I examined
his pockets & then returned
and found them with deceased.
From the attitude of the body
I should suppose that deceased
lay himself down voluntarily
but that he had been thrown
there. John M. Kivide

Henry Frederick Morris, being sworn
saith that I am a legally quali-
fied Medical Practitioner.
I have made a post-mortem
examination of body of deceased.
On removing the skull cap
I found the dura mater of
pro mater natural, the
arachnoid membrane together
with the whole of the brain
more especially the base
in a state of congestion.
Considerable serous effusion
into the right ventricle.
Heart healthy, lungs healthy
through the right - one con-
gested. abdominal viscera
healthy, stomach empty,
the lining membrane quite
healthy. - I attribute the
death of deceased to con-
gestion of the ~~serous~~
brain causing effusion
and consequent con-
gestion.

Such an attack would
probably be sudden.
The first effect & would
be giddiness which would
speedily result in in-
sensibility with such an
amount of congestion.
Henry Morris.

COLONY OF
NEW ZEALAND,
To wit.

AN INQUISITION indented, taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, at the house of *Hugh Sinclair*,
Waimu o mata
in the said Colony, on the *10th* day of *November*
in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *seventy-one*, before *J. G. Wood* Esq. J. C. D.
one of the Coroners of our Sovereign Lady the Queen for the said Colony, on view of the body of *Hugh Sinclair*,

then and there lying dead, upon the oath of
Robert Dick Foreman, Charles Collis Esq. & John Hill
William Bruce, John Williams, John Wakeham
Robert Whitley, Nicholas Thomson, David Dick Sen and
James Sproun, George Collis, Thomas Gray

good and lawful men of the neighbourhood, duly chosen, and who being there and then duly sworn and charged to inquire for our Lady the Queen,
when, how, and by what means the said *Hugh Sinclair* came to his death, do, upon their
oaths say—that

deceased *Hugh Sinclair* died on the night
between *Friday evening November 10th* and *Satur-*
day morning November 11th 1871 on the *Waimu-*
o-mata road near what is known as the
black bridge and that the cause of his death
was *congestion of the brain*.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, as well the said Coroner as the said Jurors aforesaid have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals the day and
year first above written.

J. G. Wood, Coroner.

Robert Dick, FOREMAN,
William Bruce *George Collis*
Robert Whitley *John Hill*
James Sproun *John Wakeham*
Charles Collis Esq. *David Dick Sen*
John Williams *Thomas Gray*
Nicholas Thomson

Information of witnesses severally taken and acknowledged on behalf of our Sovereign Lady Queen,
touching the death of Hugh Sinclair

At the dwelling house of Agnes Sinclair
Wainuiomata

In the provincial district of Wellington in the Colony
Above mentioned on Monday the 13th day of November 1871
Before John G. F. Wilford

One of the coroners for the said Colony, on a Inquisition then
And there taken on a view of the body of the said
Hugh Sinclair
Then and there lying dead, as follows, to witness

Thomas William Downes being sworn saith that at a 6.45 pm on Friday evening I accompanied
deceased across the Hutt River in the punt. He stopped for five minutes at Whitewoods Hotel where
he purchased a bottle of brandy which he strapped around his waist. I walked with him some distance
down the Waiwhetu Road talking about some burnings. Deceased was in his usual health. He has had
a

Missing line

quite able to ride and talked quite rationally on various matters. He had half a slip of brandy at
Whitewoods. He had been to town and was then returning. He did not linger in the Hutt more than
about a quarter of an hour. He did not call at Valentines. It was then fine weather. About half and hour
after it began to rain and blow from the south east.

When Mr Sinclair left me I consider him quite capable of taking care of himself.

Thomas W Downes signed.

Huston Campbell being sworn saith that on Friday night November 10th between 8.00 and 9.00 pm I
was on the Wainui Road or the Wainui side of the hill when I saw deceased coming hence. He was on
horseback. He asked me to have a slap of brandy. He had an unopened bottle with him. I went into my
house which is in ? taking the bottle with me and helped myself to a slap. When I came back I asked
him if he was not going to have a slap. He did bring him a cup which I did. I poured some out into the
cup part of which he drank and part he threw on the road. He then began to talk briefly referring to
roading at ? timber etc.

He talked quite sensibly.

He talked for about 10 to 15 minutes. He then got me to get a bit of flax to tie the bottle in his pocket
which I did. He then went off on the horse at a trot.

As far as drink was concerned I considered him well able to take care of himself.

The place where I left was about a mile from where he was found.

It was then raining. Deceased made no complaint of any kind.

Deceased was not sober nor was he drunk.

Huston Campbell signed.

William Wakeham being sworn said that on Saturday November 11th I was going across the road
near the black bridge in the Wainui when I noticed a horse with saddle and bridle on the road. On
crossing up I noticed deceased lying on his right side about 2 yards from the road with his feet
towards the road. Deceased hat was on the road about half a dozen yards from where he lay.

There was no sun upon his clothes or face. The head was very dickey. His pocket handkerchief was
between him and his hat. I immediately went to inform McIlvride and others of the occurrence. The
bridle row was hacking on the road.

William Wakeham signed.

John McIlvride being sworn saith that on Saturday morning November 11th between 9.00 and 10.00 am I was called by the last witness who informed me that he had found deceased lying dead near the Black Road bridge. I went to the spot. I found deceased lying on his right side. Right arm under his head. Left arm across his stomach. Deceased lay about 10 feet from the road. His hat was on the ground in front of him. His pocket handkerchief behind him. I saw no mark of a fall upon him nor did I notice any mark on his face hands or any part of his clothes His clothes were thoroughly soaked with the rain. I acquainted his friends and then returned and found others with the deceased. From the attitude of the body I would suppose that deceased laid himself down voluntarily not that he fell being thrown there.

John McIlvride signed.

Henry Frederik Norris being sworn saith that I am a legally qualified medical practitioner I have made a post mortem examination of the body of the deceased. On removing the skull cap I found the dura mater and pro mater natural. The arachnoid membrane together with the whole of brain more especially the half a state of congestion. Considerable scores into the right receptacle. Heart healthy. Lungs healthy though the right one congested. Abdominal viscera healthy. Stomach empty. The living membrane quite healthy. I attribute the death of the deceased to congestion of the brain cheris ? and congestion of the cerebellum. Such an attack would probably be sudden. The first effect would be giddiness which would speedily result in incapacity ? with back an account of our patient.

An inquisition indented, taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at the house of Agnes Sinclair at Wainui-o-mata in the said Colony on the 13th November in the year of our Lord 1871 before J. G. Fred Wilford one of the Coroners of our Sovereign Lady the Queen for the said Colony on view of the body of Hugh Sinclair then and there lying dead upon the oath of

Robert Dick Foreman
William Prouse
Robert Whiley
James Symmns
Charles Collis Junior
John Williams
Nicholas Thomsen
George Collis
St John Hall
John Wakeham
David Dick Senior
Thomas Grey

Good and lawful men of the neighbourhood, duly chosen and who being there and then duly sworn and charged to inquire for or Lady the Queen, when, how and by what means the said Hugh Sinclair came to his death, do, upon their oaths say that Deceased Hugh Sinclair died on the night between Friday evening November 10th and Saturday morning November 11th 1871 on the Wainuiomata Road near what is known as the Black Bridge and that the cause of his death was congestion of the brain.

In witness whereof, as well the said coroner as the said Jurors have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Signed

J. G. F. Wilford Coroner
Robert Dick Foreman

William Prouse
Robert Whiley
James Symmns
Charles Collis Junior
John Williams
Nicholas Thomsen
George Collis
S John Hall
John Wakeham
David Dick Senior his mark
Thomas Grey his mark

Background Information

Hugh Sinclair (1810 – 1871). He was born on 2 March 1820 Dull Perthshire Scotland. Died 10th November 1871 near Black Creek Bridge Wainuiomata. Buried at Sinclair Cemetery Wainuiomata. On 29 March 1835 Edinburgh Scotland he married Agnes Spiers (1804 – 1878) and had 6 children.

John George Frederick Wilford (1842 – 1902).
Henry Frederick Norris (1835 – 1923).
Thomas William Downes (1838 – 1909).

Robert Dick (1837 – 1893).
William Prouse (1825 – 1878).
Robert Whiley (1837 – 1913).
James Symmns – no trace.
Charles Collis Junior (1840 – 1913).
John Williams – no trace.
Nicholas Thomsen – no trace.
George Collis (1848 – 1926).
S John Hall – no trace.
John Wakeham (1848 – 1931).
David Dick Senior (1810 – 1900).
Thomas Grey (1835 – 1913).
John McIlvride (1833 – 1906).
Agnes Sinclair nee Spiers (1809 – 1878).
Huston Campbell (1845 – 1899).

James Symmns and his brother John were living in Wellington in the 1880s.
John Hall lived in Wainuiomata for 10 years according to 1870s electoral rolls.