

Kangaroo Flat Cemetery



Charles GRIGG and son Norman.
Charles died in a mining accident.

Images:
Grigg_001_KF_1204.JPG
to
Grigg_001_KF_1204B.JPG

Erected
by
ALICE
in loving remembrance of her husband
CHARLES HENRY GRIGG
who was accidentally killed April 12th 1888,
Aged 22 years
"Young and old here may see
Who by my grave do pass
That death's keen scythe
So quick did come
and cut me down like grass
Some of you perhaps may think
From danger to be free
But in one moment may be called
into eternity."
also their son
NORMAN
who died June 12th 1887 Aged 6 months



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Charles Grigg

Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Fri 13 Apr 1888 Page 2

FATAL MINING ACCIDENT

A fatal accident occurred at the New Chum and Victoria mine early yesterday morning. A young man named Charles Grigg, aged 22, was engaged with his mate, Samuel Laity, sinking the shaft at a depth of 2,000 feet, when a slab in the timbering at the end of the shaft came away and struck Grigg on the head, knocking him and part of the staging into the water below. When Laity went down he found Grigg quite dead. As no engine-driver is employed on the mine at night, no communication with the surface could be obtained till six o'clock in the morning when the blacksmith came to work. The fact of there being no engine-driver during the night shift was mentioned at the inquest, and it is undeniable that by the presence of an engine-driver many an accident might be prevented from having a fatal issue.

In Grigg's case as he was instantaneously killed, the early removal of the body to the surface would have been of no avail, but had he been only seriously injured, he

might have bled to death for want of proper medical attendance. There is a strong feeling amongst the miners that an engine driver should always be in attendance when the men are below at the great depths in the mines. From the evidence adduced at the inquest, it appears that the underground boss, who is the deceased's brother, had two or three times called the attention of the men to the state of the timber, and asked them to have it replaced. The deceased lived in Honeysuckle Street, and leaves a widow and two children.

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THE INQUEST

In the afternoon an inquest was held by the deputy coroner (Mr E C Bell), and a jury of five, when the following evidence was adduced:-

Robert Jackson mining manager of the company, stated that deceased had been in the employ of the company for 5 or 6 years. He was engaged in sinking the shaft. It would have been his duty to commence work at 11 o'clock on Wednesday night. Two men, named Samuel Laity and Patrick O'Shanassy, were working with him. They were supposed to carry on their work in the usual manner. He (the witness) heard of the accident in the morning, and immediately proceeded to the mine, where he found the body in the engine house. He communicated with Mr Grainger, the inspector of mines, who arrived shortly afterwards, and they descended the mine in company with Wm Grigg, the brother of the deceased.

To Mr Grainger: He remembered having his attention called to some work that had been done owing to some of the end boards being forced out of position. He believed it was Wm Grigg that called his attention to these boards. Wm Grigg was the underground boss. As soon as his attention was directed to it he instructed Grigg to get the timber fixed. This was not the place from where the board that caused the accident fell. The boards in question might have been caused by the concussion from the shot. His opinion was that the end boards had not been properly filled in behind. The timbering of the shaft was carried on under the underground boss. He considered the deceased to be a practical miner, with large general experience.

To the foreman: The end piece was the piece that fell out. The timber is at present 16 or 18 feet from the bottom of the shaft. The shaft was centred down as far as the bottom of the timber. The boards were secured by 1x3 inch battens. The piece of timber that caused the accident fell about 50 feet, and was one of the last timbering done. Samuel Laity, miner, deposed, that in company with the deceased and Patrick O'Shanassy, he commenced work about 10 minutes past 11 on Wednesday night. They drilled three holes, and had put a stage in the bottom of the shaft for the purpose of standing on to change the drill. They refined the drill, and about half an hour afterwards deceased sang out to the platman to send down a dipper. O'Shanassy sent it down in a bucket. As the bucket was descending the timber fell from the west end of the shaft. It knocked away the stage and struck the deceased,

who fell to the bottom of the shaft. Witness descended, and took deceased out of the water that was there. To all appearances then he was quite dead. With O'Shanassy's assistance they raised deceased to the high ground in the west end of the shaft, and then they tried to get to the surface. They went as far as the ladders allowed, and then they commenced to ring the knocker. When the blacksmith came to the mine about 6 in the morning he heard them. There was no other way to the surface but by ringing ten knocks.

To the Inspector of Mines: To his knowledge the underground boss was not made aware of the state of the timber in the shaft. Deceased never said he was aware of the state of the timber. To a Juryman: There was no engine-driver employed at the mine on the night shift, or boss of any description to represent the mine. This was the practice in several mines. Patrick O'Shanassy gave corroborative evidence.

William Grigg, brother of deceased deposed that he had conversation with him respecting some timber on Saturday evening last. It was in reference to the end pieces of timber that he and his mate, had put in being driven back slightly with the shots that had been on the day before. He asked deceased to put them their places so as to render them secure, deceased did not carry out the instructions. Witness subsequently mentioned to his brother that the timber should be replaced, and had this been done the accident would not have happened. O'Shanassy was present when the instructions were given.

On the afternoon prior to the accident, he was down the shaft, and saw that the timber was still out of place. He called the attention of the men on the shift to the fact. There was another way besides the cages of getting to the surface, but he did not think that either O'Shanassy or Laity knew of it. The timber to all appearance was safe when he last saw it, but it must have been further disturbed by the firing of shots.

Alfred John Streade, miner, deposed that he was working on the afternoon shift in the New Chum and Victoria mine, and that on Wednesday afternoon Mr Grigg called his attention to the state of the timber, and told him if he had time to replace it. They had not time, and they told Mr Grigg so.

W H Grainger, inspector of mines, deposed receiving information of the accident and attending at the mine at once. He descended to the 1,975 feet plat, and from thence to the place where the timber fell away. He found the place where the last two closing pieces had been put in was not properly filled in behind the timber. There was a piece of quartering which was evidently intended to keep the end pieces in position. Dr Atkinson deposed to having examined the deceased, whom he found in the engine room. He was quite dead. There were several abrasions on the forehead, and a large contusion over the temporal region, on the right side. A large quantity of blood was issuing from the mouth and nostrils. The skull was probably fractured at this stage, and was the result of a fall on the head.

They returned a verdict of accidental death.



Compiled by Olwen Fenton & Ian Belmont
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