

Alfred WALKER, 7/1918

Timaru Herald. 16 Sep 1924 (PP) [17/05/2002]

DEATHS

WALKER. - On September 15, at Christchurch Hospital, Private Alfred James Walker, of the 8th Reinforcements and beloved husband of Elizabeth Hazel Walker, of Timaru; aged 30 years. Deeply regretted. Interment Timaru Cemetery.

Ashburton Guardian. 16 September 1924

FATAL JOKE.

CHRISTCHURCH, This Day.

Last Tuesday afternoon, Alfred Walker accidentally swallowed some weed-killer, which was poisonous. He had lifted a gallon jar of the mixture to his lips for a joke, but a mouthful slipped through, and he died in the Christchurch Hospital yesterday morning.

Mr Walker was one of a working bee at the Heathcote bowling green, and he had been warned by the other men to leave the jar alone. He laughingly picked it up. After he had swallowed some of the mixture he fell down, and appeared to be in pain.

An emetic of mustard and water was given to him as soon as possible, and he was afterwards brought up to the Christchurch Hospital. His condition was bad, but he became steadily worse.

A statement was made by Mr Walker after the incident to the effect that he alone was to blame for what had happened.

Press. 16 September 1924

LABOURER'S DEATH.

Alfred John Walker, who, on September 9th, drank a quantity of weed-killer by mistake, died in the hospital yesterday morning. Deceased was working with three other men on the Heathcote bowling green on September 9th. They all went into a shed when finished for the day, and deceased picked up a large bottle which was on the table and drank some of the contents, more or less as a joke. This was a poison used on the green for killing grubs. In a statement made before he died, deceased said that he thought it was beer that some of the other men had brought from the hotel.

An inquest will be held at 10.30 this morning.

Press. 16 September 1924

A FATAL MISTAKE.

MAN DRINKS POISON.

At the Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon, before the Coroner, Mr H. Y. Widdowson, an inquest was held into the circumstances of the death of Alfred John Walker.

Deceased died at the Christchurch Hospital on Monday morning from the effects of having swallowed poison.

Joseph Round, licensee of the Heathcote Hotel, said he had identified the body as that of Alfred John Walker, who was 44 years of age. Witness had known deceased for about four years. Deceased was not drinking at all, as he was to have undergone an operation for a bad leg. He was staying at witness's hotel. Deceased had a wife in Timaru. On September 9th deceased went for a walk to the Heathcote bowling green. At about 4 p.m. witness heard that Walker had swallowed poison and he was brought to the hotel. An ambulance then took deceased to the Hospital.

Dr. C. H. Gould said that deceased, when admitted to the Hospital, appeared to be suffering from the effects of corrosive poison, and was accordingly treated. His condition was grave from the beginning. Later, gangrene set in, and he died at 9.30 on Monday morning. In witness's opinion death was due to toxic absorption from destruction of the tissues lining the gullet and the stomach, caused by the taking of poison. The poison contained perchloride of mercury and hydrochloric acid. One gulp of the poison would be quite enough to cause death. He had taken a signed statement from deceased, in which the latter did not blame any of his mates for the occurrence.

Dr. F. G. Ward, house surgeon at the Christchurch Hospital, also gave evidence. John Robert Morgan, of Heathcote, said that deceased was perfectly sober at the time of the occurrence. Witness did not know any of the ingredients of the poison. Witness ordered it from a chemist. William Wataon, of Heathcote, said he went to the Heathcote bowling green with Morgan and a man named Newey came down later, He gave corroborative evidence of the occurrence, stating that Morgan told deceased what was in the bottle before he touched it.

Walter Newey, cycle mechanic, of Heathcote, Detective Connolly, and Constable Bosworth, of Woolston, also gave evidence.

The Coroner said as there was no evidence as to what the bottle actually contained, the inquest would be adjourned until to-day, in order to obtain the evidence of Mr White-Parsons, chemist, of Lyttelton.

Timaru Herald. 18 September 1924

FATAL JEST.

By Telegraph - Press Association.

CHRISTCHURCH, Sept. 17.

On the 9th inst., Alfred John Walker, a labourer, from the Chatham Islands, who was waiting to undergo an operation at Christchurch Hospital, visited the Heathcote bowling green, where men were at work preparing the green. On the table was a bottle of weed-killer, and in a spirit of fun he placed it to his lips. The bottle was fuller than he anticipated, and some of the mixture went down his throat. An emetic was administered, and he was hurried to the hospital. Gangrene of the internal tissues set in, and he died on Monday. At an inquest a verdict of death by misadventure was returned.