

20 HOURS IN A TREE

WAIMATE SHOOTING PARTY'S HARDSHIPS.

BOAT SWAMPED IN WAITAKI RIVER.

Stranded for some twenty hours including all last night on a small willow tree in the middle of the Waitaki river at its worst part was the fate of three Waimate men — Messrs William Boland, George E. Bray and R. Sullivan. They were bravely rescued at 5.30 this morning, in an exhausted state, though not as bad as had been expected.

The rumour current last night was that the three had been drowned, and the tale found wide-spread credence in Waimate and the district between the Waitaki. The true facts became known to-day, however, and anxiety was allayed.

Boat Struck a Tree.

The three men constituted a shooting party which went out on the Waitaki yesterday. Coming down the river about 11 a.m. they were unable to avoid a willow tree in mid-stream, at the dangerous part in the vicinity of Mr Baikie's, and the boat was swamped. This is considered the worst part of the river. They managed to clamber on to the tree out of the water and their long vigil commenced.

Late in the afternoon when the party had given up hope of being discovered that day and possibly till they were missed from Waimate on Tuesday or Wednesday, a horseman was glimpsed on the Oamaru side. They shouted to him and waved a handkerchief, and the wind being favourable the horseman heard and discovered their plight. The police were soon notified.

Darkness Delays Search.

Constable Berry, of Glenavy, was in charge of operations, and the rescue party also included Mr Wm. White, who is employed at Mr S. Dixon's, and Mr J. Wall, farmer of Redcliff, who bravely performed the actual rescue work in the river; and Constables Trethewey and Barford, of Oamaru. Two boats, one belonging to the police and one to Mr Wall, were brought to the scene of operations; but as by the time preparations were made darkness had fallen, the work had necessarily to be delayed till daylight this morning. Messrs Wesley Bros. kept fires going, and these were a source of comfort to the stranded three, and also to the others. Fortunately, the night was clement.

The Rescue.

About 5 o'clock this morning the rescue boat, manned by Messrs White and Wall, was launched, upstream from the willow tree. The boat was coolly and carefully steered past the tree, a rope with stone attached being thrown out. As luck, and

probably good management, would have it, the rope went across the tree and the men there grabbed it and secured it. Had the move failed, the boat would very likely have been wrecked among the many snags in the vicinity, with serious consequences.

The rescue boat was hauled up to the tree and the men taken in, passage then being made to the Oamaru side which was more easily accessible. To get back to the north side the boat was first towed a distance up the river clear of the dangerous place, and the journey across was then made.

The exhausted men were warmly received and were supplied with brandy, and tea and sandwiches, which were only too welcome. After refreshment, they were brought to their homes in cars.

Constable Berry is grateful for all who assisted in connection with the rescue work. In regard to Messrs White and Wall who risked their lives, he has expressed himself as thankful beyond words. Their calmness and coolness was an outstanding feature, and was really responsible for the success of the rescue.

“We Were Very Lucky.”

Speaking of the affair, Mr Sullivan considered they were very lucky indeed. “We ought to take a ticket in Tatt’s after that,” he said jokingly. He went on to say that there had been plenty of room on the tree for all three. They tied themselves with rope to the branches to prevent falling off should they go to sleep; but there had not been much hope of sleep! Late in the afternoon before they had been discovered they had thought the enforced confinement would at least be till tomorrow, as they were not expected back in Waimate till to-day at the latest. The prospect of being two days and nights perched on a tree trunk in the middle of the river was not a pleasant one.

Mr Sullivan referred to the dangerousness of the stretch of river and was highly complimentary regarding Messrs Wall and White’s courageous act.

Timaru Herald. 8 May 1936

CAR CAPSIZES WAIMATE RESIDENT KILLED

ACCIDENT ON MAJOR’S HILL

Crushed by a car which capsized over a 10ft bank after running backwards for 100 yards down a steep incline Richard Sullivan, aged 54, of Hughes Street, Waimate, was killed instantly yesterday afternoon. A passenger in the car, John James Jones, also of Waimate, escaped unhurt.

The accident occurred on Major's Hill at Stoney Creek about 3 p.m. Sullivan, who was driving, attempted to change gear when nearing the crest of the hill and failed. The brakes did not function and the car ran backwards, gradually gaining speed and capsizing over the bank. A wheel of the car crushed Sullivan's chest, death apparently being instantaneous.

Jones extricated himself from the wreckage in a dazed condition, but was otherwise unhurt. He was able to summon assistance.

Sullivan, a bricklayer by occupation, was a married man with an adult family of seven.

An inquest will be held at Waimate to-day.

Press. 8 May 1936

MOTORIST KILLED NEAR WAIMATE CAR RUNS BACKWARD OVER TEN-FOOT BANK

[THE PRESS Special Service.]

WAIMATE, May 7.

Richard Sullivan, aged 54 years, a bricklayer, of Hughes street, Waimate, was killed about 3 p.m. to-day when the motor-car he was driving got out of control on a steep hill, near Waihao Forks, and ran backward over a 10-foot bank.

Sullivan, who was accompanied by J. Jones, of Waimate, was at the time carrying two rams to his farm at Waihao Forks. It is thought that the car slipped its gears and that the brakes failed to hold. Sullivan received extensive injuries to his chest but his companion was unhurt.

Sullivan was married and had a family of seven girls. He was an old and well-known resident of Waimate and was a Boer War veteran.

Timaru Herald. 9 May 1936

FARMERS' DEATH CAR CAPSIZES ON HILL

INEFFICIENT BRAKES

A verdict that Richard Sullivan was killed by an accident with a motor car which overturned on him when driving up a hill at Stoney Creek, pinning him down and bring about death by suffocation was found by the District Coroner, Mr G. Dash, at the inquest at Waimate yesterday. Evidence was given that the brakes of the car were in a very inefficient condition.

George Edward Bray, a salesman, residing in Herbert Street, Waimate, gave evidence of identification. He said he was familiar with the car, which was an old model in reasonable condition. The foot brake would stop the car on the flat, but he doubted whether it would hold the car on a steep incline. In his opinion the foot brake and hand brake together would have held the car on the hill where the accident occurred.

Companion's Evidence

John James Jones, a tea room proprietor, Waimate, said that at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Sullivan called for him to accompany him to his farm at Stoney Creek, where he intended to muster sheep. They picked up two rams in Waimate to take to the farm, and placed them in the back of the car. They also carried two dogs, putting one in the back and the other in the front of the car. They proceeded along the Stoney Creek road and commenced to climb the hill past the residence of Mr Major in top gear. Near the crest of the hill Sullivan, who was driving, attempted to change down, but the gears did not engage. While Sullivan was struggling to engage the gears, he put the foot brake on hard, but the car ran back slowly for about 50 yards and then took a sharp turn to the left and capsized over the bank. Witness said he had the impression that Sullivan thought he was on flat ground and was backing the car in order to start up again. The car had on previous occasions run back on that hill, but Sullivan had been able to bring it to a standstill.

Witness said he was familiar with the car. The brakes were in a terrible condition, even the hand brake. He had often been on to Sullivan about the brakes. He did not notice whether Sullivan applied the hand brake when the car commenced to run back. The car tipped over the bank upside down with both underneath, though witness was thrown partly clear and was able to extricate himself. He called out, "Are you all right, Dick?" but got no answer. He tried unsuccessfully to lift the car. Mr Dench, who was ploughing in an adjoining field came to his assistance, but they were unable to raise the car. Dench then went for assistance and arrived back with three others in about half an hour. In the opinion of witness Sullivan was dead when pulled out from under the car. He was sure no accident would have occurred if the brakes had been efficient.

Medical Opinion

Dr T. W. Wylie said that he accompanied Sergeant Murray to the scene of the accident, leaving Waimate about 3.15 p.m. When he viewed the body, life was extinct. No bones had been broken and there were no cuts about the body. Sullivan's, face was livid and there were small abrasions on the upper part of the chest. Pieces of dried grass and earth were in the mouth. In his opinion death was due to suffocation, Sullivan being unable to breathe owing to the weight of the car on his chest and neck.

A constable gave evidence of visiting the scene of the accident with Mr Sadler, a Waimate garage proprietor and inspecting the car. The brake linings were worn out and useless, and the wheels could be turned around with the brakes on. The Coroner then brought in his verdict as above.

Otago Daily Times. 9 May 1936

Motorist's Death

At the inquest into the death of Richard Sullivan, who was killed when the car he was driving ran backwards down a steep hill at Waihao Forks on Thursday afternoon and overturned, the coroner (Mr G. Dash) returned a verdict that death was due to suffocation caused by the inability of the deceased to breathe, owing to the weight of the car on his chest and neck.

Timaru Herald. 11 May 1936

The funeral of Mr R. Sullivan was held on Saturday afternoon and attended by members of the Waimate R S A., Druids' Lodge and Silver Band together with relatives and many friends. The cortege left the Catholic Church for the Waimate Cemetery where the R.S.A. firing party fired a volley at the graveside.

Press. 11 May 1936

FUNERAL OF WAIMATE RESIDENT

The funeral of Mr Richard Sullivan, which was held at Waimate on Saturday afternoon, was attended by members of the Waimate Returned Soldiers' Association, the Druids' Lodge, and the Waimate Silver Band, as well as the relatives and many friends. The funeral cortege left the Roman Catholic Church after Requiem Mass. The Returned Soldiers' Association provided a firing party at the graveside.

Timaru Herald. 12 May 1936

OBITUARY

Waimate sports bodies will feel deeply the loss they have suffered in the death of Mr R. Sullivan, which occurred under tragic circumstances on Thursday last. Born in Waimate on May 13, 1882, Mr Sullivan spent the whole of his life in the district, and displayed a practical interest in many of its activities. He was in particular an enthusiastic sportsman, shooting, boxing and wrestling being the

branches in which he was best known. He was the organiser of the first Waimate Boxing Association, and was instrumental in arranging the Cleverley v. Campbell fight in Waimate. Mr Sullivan, who was the fourth son of the late Mary and George Sullivan, was educated at St. Joseph's Convent, Waimate. He was afterwards apprenticed to Mr Pelvin, Glenavy, as a blacksmith, and later became a bricklayer. At the age of 18 he served in the Boer War and, during the Great War, he drove an ambulance in Samoa. In 1904 Mr Sullivan married the only daughter of the late Ann and Arthur Shirley. There were seven daughters by the marriage: Mrs A. Cleverley (Wellington), Mrs J. Freeman (Christchurch), Mrs Wright (Waimate) and Marjorie, Francis, Doreen, Sydney.

Timaru Herald. 18 June 1936 [10/11/2022]

WAIMATE R.C.

MEETING OF COMMITTEE

Waimate Racing Club

A motion of sympathy with the relatives of the late Mr Richard Sullivan, a member of the club, was carried.

Timaru Herald. 26 Sep 1936 [10/11/2022]

SOUTH AFRICAN VETERANS ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report of the South African Veterans' Association states that the re-union last year was a great success, visitors being present from Invercargill, Dunedin, Oamaru, and Christchurch. The Association was well represented at the Anzac Service after which members adjourned for afternoon tea. Several small grants were made throughout the year. Membership is still growing, 102, South Canterbury holding the record considering the size of the district. The president and several members visited re-unions at Invercargill, Dunedin, Oamaru, and Christchurch, and were royally entertained. The peace of Vereeniging Church Parade was largely attended, the service being conducted by the Rev. J. Milburn Stewart. The executive regretted to report the passing of one member, Comrade **Richard Sullivan**, Waimate.

Southland Times. 31 March 1920 (PP) [13/06/2022]

FATALITY AT RAKAHOUKA. MATAURA ISLAND FARMER KILLED.

About nine o'clock last night the Inspector of Police received telephone advice from Mr James Milne, of Rakahouka, that a motor fatality had occurred opposite his farm. The car contained Messrs C. Carnie and G. Sullivan, both of Mataura Island, and the latter was thrown out while the vehicle was rounding a corner and killed. The details are meagre. The body was brought to the morgue. An inquest will be opened to-day.

Mr George Sullivan was born in England and for many years served before the mast as an A.B. in the merchant service. He came to Southland from Waimate when the Edendale estate --was cut up for closer settlement, taking up a section at Ota Creek. After disposing of his section there he dealt extensively in draught-horses, taking some shipments to the Melbourne market when trade was booming in draught horses in Victoria. After several years in the horse business he bought a farm at Mataura, close to the second bridge. Mr Sullivan was well known throughout the Eastern district, and was acknowledged to be one of the best judges of Clydesdale stock in his district. By his second marriage, contracted late

in life, he leaves a widow and several small children. His family by his-first wife are grown up.

Mataura Ensign. 31 March 1920 [04/11/2022]

SOUTHLAND FARMER KILLED.

INVERCARGILL. March 31.

About 9 o'clock last night the Inspector of Police received telephone advice from Mr James Milne, of Rakahouka, that a motor fatality had occurred opposite his farm. The car contained Messrs C. Carnie and G. Sullivan, both of Mataura Island, and the latter was thrown out while the vehicle was rounding a corner and killed. The details are meagre. The body was brought to the morgue. An inquest will be opened to-day.

Mr George Sullivan was born in England and for many years served before the mast as an A.B. in the merchant service. He came to Southland from Waimate when the Edendale estate was cut up for closer settlement, taking up a section at Ota Creek. After disposing of his section there he dealt extensively in draught horses, taking some shipments to the Melbourne market when trade was booming in draught horses in Victoria. After several years in the horse business he bought a farm at Mataura close to the second bridge. Mr Sullivan was well known throughout the Eastern District, and was acknowledged to be one of the best judges of Clydesdale stock in his district. By his second marriage, contracted late in life, he leaves a widow and several small children. His family by his first wife are all grown up.

Mataura Ensign. 1 April 1920 [15/11/2022]

Further particulars were received by the Invercargill police yesterday in regard to the death of Mr G. Sullivan, a farmer of Mataura Island, who was killed as the result of a motor accident at Rakahouka on Tuesday evening. The deceased, accompanied by a friend named James Carnie, had been to Invercargill and to the Wallacetown stock sale. Then they motored to Ryal Bush in order to see Carnie's son and left about 4 p.m. in a four-seater Ford car on the return journey to Mataura Island. Carnie was driving. When they had proceeded about a mile past Mr J. Milne's farm at Rakahouka the front tyre came off when the car was turning a corner and both the occupants were thrown on to the road. The car capsized and Sullivan was pinned underneath. Carnie succeeded in releasing his friend, and obtained assistance, but Mr Sullivan had sustained injuries which proved fatal. An inquest will be held on Saturday.

Timaru Herald. 31 March 1920 (PP) [13/06/2022]

FATAL FALL FROM CAR.

INVERCARGILL, March 30.

A motoring fatality occurred at Raka South this evening. While a car containing C. Carnie and **George Sullivan** of Mataura Island, was rounding a corner, **Sullivan** was thrown out and killed. Mr **Sullivan** was a well-known horse dealer for many years, and was one of the best judges of Clydesdale stock in the district. He leaves a widow and family.

Press. 31 March 1920 [04/11/2022]

INVERCARGILL, March 30.

A motoring fatality occurred at Rakauhauka this evening. While a car containing C. Carnie and **George Sullivan**, of Mataura Island, was rounding a corner, **Sullivan** was thrown out and killed. **Sullivan** was a well-known horse dealer for many years, and one of the best judges of Clydesdale stock in the district. He leaves a widow and family.

Southland Times. 1 April 1920 (PP) [13/06/2022]

DEATHS

SULLIVAN.—At Rakahouka, on Tuesday, March 30, 1920 (the result of an accident), **George**, dearly beloved husband of Mary Jane **Sullivan**, Mataura Island; aged 66 years. R.I.P. The funeral will leave the house at 9.30 a.m. (punctually) on Friday, April 2, for the Wyndham Cemetery. Friends please accept this (the only) intimation.—Kingsland & Ferguson, Undertakers.

Waimate Daily Advertiser. 19 April 1927 (PP) [13/06/2022]

DEATH

SULLIVAN.—On April 18th, 1927,
at Kaikoura: Mary, relict of the
late George Sullivan; aged 78
years.

Death reg, as Mary Elizabeth SULLIVAN

Waimate Daily Advertiser. 19 April 1927 [21/11/2022]

FUNERAL NOTICE

THE friends of the late Mrs Sulli-
van are respectfully informed
that her funeral will leave the resid-
ence of her son, Mr Richard Sulli-
van, Hughes Street, on Thursday,
the 21st inst., at 2 p.m., for St. Au-
gustine's Church, and thence to the
Waimate Cemetery.

GEO. W. COLLET, 1,
Undertaker,

Waimate Daily Advertiser. 23 April 1927 (PP) [13/06/2022]

OBITUARY.

MRS MARY SULLIVAN.

There passed away from our midst on April 18th at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr S. Pluck, at Kaikoura, a very old identity in the person of Mrs Mary Sullivan, relict of the late George Sullivan. Mrs Sullivan was born in Maddern-Church-town, Cornwall, England, and with her husband came out to New Zealand in the sailing ship Blairgowrie, arriving at Timaru in 1875, where the late Mr Sullivan started work constructing the railway line through from Timaru to Studholme Junction. They next came on to Waimate, where they settled, and remained in and around Waimate ever since. There were ten of a family, eight sons and two daughters (one deceased), who are left to mourn her loss. There are also thirty-five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The late Mrs Sullivan was a very strong and warm-hearted woman, doing a good turn and giving a word of good advice to all, and she was loved and respected by all who knew her. She had lived a very strenuous life in the early days, but was rewarded for it all by a peaceful and happy death.

(Surs Copy)

Newspaper article re Sullivan Reunion - Unsure of the date??

130 Sullivans reunite

About 130 Sullivans got together in Waimate over the weekend — just over 100 years after their forebears arrived in Waimate from Cornwall to settle.

Just when George and Elizabeth Sullivan arrived here is not certain, but it was soon after their marriage at Penzance, Cornwall, in 1875.

George was a contractor and drove threshing mills around the district. They lived at Roberts' property in Painstown before moving to Hampden to take over the hotel there.

They later moved back to Waimate to live near Knottingley Park before shifting to Hunter. Their last family home was at Noakes Garden opposite the present Waimate golf course.

BARBECUE

On Saturday, descendants of some of their children — George, James, William, Caroline and Thomas — enjoyed a barbecue at Victoria Park before cold weather forced a move to the Waimate Stadium for photographs and refreshments.

It was a family day with

children happily playing with newfound relatives while their parents talked, and talked.

A dance was held on Saturday night.

The family history had new twists as the day went on. Was George's wife Elizabeth Anne Kelly? Someone said she was really Mary Elizabeth Green.

John, or Jock, the eldest son, had no children, nor did Charles or Humphrey (Paddy). Mary died when she was 18.

TRACTION ENGINE

Jock drove the first traction engine from Christchurch to Waimate, in the days when the road was barely a track and there were no bridges.

George left the family home and went to Matura in Southland where his son Billy had drawn a small dairy farm in a ballot. Billy left his father to take over the farm, but George died in an accident.

Elizabeth is said to have spent her last years with daughter Caroline in a hotel in Kaikoura, where she died in 1927.

Descendants and relatives

by marriage came from the Waimate district, Christchurch, Ashburton, Blenheim, Pahiatua, Wellington, Dunedin, Oamaru, Auckland and Hamilton.

WAIMATE ORGANISER

Mr Murray Sullivan, who runs a milk bar in Waimate, organised the event with the help of cousin Judith from Ashburton, and local relatives.

"It all started when we were at the funeral of Lyall Sullivan, who died in Ashburton in June," he said. "It seemed the only time the family was getting together was at funerals, so we decided to hold a reunion."

Climb abandoned

Because of wet conditions, the family climb of Little Mount Peel, organised by the Geraldine Tramping Club has been abandoned.

"The tramping club must now push on with its normal programme," said the club captain, Mr Peter Dobson, yesterday. "It is possible, however, that a family climb of Little Mount Peel may be organised in the spring."