

Evening Star. 11 October 1926 (Papers Past) [21/12/2020]

ROXBURGH MAN'S DEATH

INJURED WHILE OUT RIDING

Lionel Gordon Wright, a young Roxburgh fanner, left his home on Friday to ride round and have a look at his sheep. He was a long time away, and anxiety was aroused when, about the middle of the afternoon, his horse returned riderless, followed some time later by the dogs.

A search was straightway organised, but the missing man was not found that day. The search was continued the next morning, and at last he was found lying on a rise, but badly bruised and injured about the head.

The man was attended by Dr Gilmour, of Roxburgh, and was brought by ambulance to Dunedin, reaching the hospital at about 9.20 on Saturday night. An operation was carried out by Mr Gordon Bell and Dr M'Nicol yesterday morning, but the patient sank and died later in the day.

One surmise is that the horse, which was a somewhat restive one, threw Mr Wright in crossing a spur.

He was a married man, aged thirty-two, with no children. An inquest was opened this afternoon, Mr H. W. Bundle, S.M., sitting as coroner.

Evidence of identification was given by William Reynolds Falconer Fraser, a retired bank officer, living at 63 Lees street.

The proceedings were then adjourned sine die.

Mt Benger Mail. 20 October 1926 (Papers Past) [21/12/2020]

LIONEL GORDON WRIGHT'S DEATH.

DID WAR INJURIES CONTRIBUTE?

INQUEST ADJOURNED.

Lionel Gordon Wright, the Roxburgh farmer, who was out riding when he received the injuries that caused his death, was a returned soldier whose war wounds had left him with a stiff leg. From the evidence given at the inquest in Dunedin on Tuesday morning last, which showed that deceased always had to mount a horse from the wrong side, the Coroner (Mr H. W. Bundle, S.M.) said it was possible that the accident was attributable to the stiff leg, and, deceased being a war pensioner, he adjourned the proceedings to allow the Director-General of Medical Services to be notified.

Dr Lawrence Cradock McNickel, house surgeon at the Dunedin Hospital, said that deceased was admitted at 9.30 p.m. on Saturday. He was unconscious, and remaining so, an operation was decided by Dr Bell, Dr Newlands, and Dr Fitchett, and was commenced shortly before 1 p.m. on the Sunday. The idea was to remove pressure on the brain. Mr Beil operated and witness assisted. They found the brain swollen and engorged with fluid. Deceased's condition was such that nothing could be done, and he died at 7.20 p.m. He had a fracture of the left leg at the knee, bruising behind the left shoulder, and slight injury at the back of the head. There was a red mark under the right armpit, and all was consistent with his having been thrown from a horse and dragged.

Arthur Lovat Fraser, a sheep farmer at Teviot, said he knew deceased well, being a neighbour of his. Deceased had a stiff leg, the result of war wounds. His bodily health was otherwise good. On Thursday deceased left his home at about 8 a.m., riding a restive horse and accompanied by a dog. Some six hours later the horse came home riderless, and the dog returned some four hours later. A party was organised and a search was carried out till 1 a.m., and resumed at 4 a.m. An hour later deceased was found lying on a hillside about a quarter of a mile from his home. There were hoof marks on the ground round about. Deceased had apparently been either dismounting or getting on the horse, and getting the reins caught beneath his arm, had been flung heavily to the ground. Dr Gilmour attended him.

The Coroner: He was a returned soldier, and the question of the war injuries arises.

Mr Fraser: It was probably due to his stiff leg that the accident happened. He had to mount his horse from the wrong side, and he had difficulty in mounting this particular horse, which was restive and inclined to start away before the rider was properly in the saddle.

Gerald Sanders, another neighbour of deceased, corroborated the evidence of the previous witness. He said it was quite a job for a fit man to comfortably mount the horse in question. Deceased's stiff leg would give him less chance than another man would have, it was possible that the horse fell on him in twisting towards him.

The Coroner formally adjourned the proceedings in order that the Director-General of Medical Services might be notified.

Sergeant Turner represented the police.

The inquest was concluded in Dunedin on Thursday into the circumstances of the death of Lionel Gordon Wright, the Roxburgh farmer who was found on Friday last in an unconscious condition about a quarter of a mile from his home. Sergeant Turner represented the Police.

The Coroner (Mr H. W. Bundle, S.M.) said it was clear from the evidence that the deceased was in the act of mounting his horse when he was thrown. The horse was restive, and owing to war injuries deceased had a stiff knee, and

attempted to mount the horse on the wrong side. The exact cause of death could not be ascertained but he would return a verdict to the effect that he had met his death as the result of injuries, shock, and exposure after being thrown from a horse. He added that the deceased suffered from a stiff knee, and this had caused him to mount the horse on the wrong side. He was of opinion that this had contributed to the accident, especially as the horse was restive.