

Fatal Accident—Two Lives Lost.

A lamentable accident, attended with the loss of two lives, occurred on Wednesday morning last. It appears that Mr Dearden has a contract to supply the Government with stone, which he quarries in Freshwater Bay. He left Perth in his flat about 7 a.m. on Wednesday morning, and arrived at the Bluff Point, on the western side of Freshwater Bay, about 8 a.m. where the stone was on the shore ready for shipment. They moored the flat, breakfasted, and then proceeded to load. While stowing the stone, Dearden's assistant cried out that the rock was falling, and both of them rushed forward, when the rock fell and sunk the boat. Dearden swam on shore, and the other man also attempted to do the same, but was unable. A Pensioner named Campbell saw the accident from the shore, and boldly jumped into the water to save the drowning man. He brought him up twice and then both sank before the Government flat, which was close at hand, could come to the rescue, poor Campbell's body was speedily found and taken to Perth, and conveyed to the Colonial Hospital. An inquest was held on the same evening at the Colonial Hospital, before T. N. Yule, Esq., and a respectable jury, of which the following is the result:—

John Dearden, deposed he had a contract for supplying the Government with stone; he left the jetty, at Perth, on Wednesday morning last, between five and six o'clock, to bring up a load in his boat (of about 8 tons), William Sydenham, a ticket-of-leave holder, was in his employ and working the boat with him, about 7 a.m. they arrived at the Bluff Point the western extremity of Freshwater Bay, they there anchored the boat head and stern close to the shore, and then proceeded to take their breakfast. About 8 o'clock, while they were loading the boat being then both in her, Sydenham called out "the rock is coming," they immediately flew under the forecastle, Dearden remembers nothing more till he found himself up to the neck in water, the boat was then sinking, he caught hold of some of the rigging and clambered up to the top of the mast, from which he was washed off, and eventually swam on shore. In some degree he lost consciousness, he was blind, he fancied

he lost consciousness, he was blind, he fancied he heard some person say "one struggle more and you are all right," he was drawn out of the water by some one he cannot say who, he afterwards saw the men belonging to the Government flat taking Campbell into the flat; he called to Dogget's boat which was coming for stone, and they took the body to Perth. he did not know but heard that Campbell was on the shore and lost his life in endeavoring to save Sydenham.

Stephen Elsom, deposed that he was working in a government flat in conveying stone from Freshwater Bay to Perth. He arrived at the western extremity of Freshwater Bay on Wednesday morning last, about 8 a.m. He saw the rock near the point fall in with a heavy crash upon Dearden's boat, he thought there must have been 1000 tons, he saw the boat sink, and heard Sydenham call out for a plank or oar, he was not near enough to render any assistance, Campbell, a pensioner, was on shore quarrying stone, he saw him run into the water, get hold of Sydenham and lift him twice, he then loosed him and he sank, Campbell remained floating after this about a minute when he also sank, he was afterwards enabled to recover the body of Campbell but could not find that of Sydenham, he assisted to pull Dearden out of the water.

Herbert Harris, deposed that he was an assistant at the Colonial Hospital, Mr Fergu-

son, Colonial Surgeon, and himself had examined the body of the deceased since he was brought to the Hospital, he had certainly died from drowning.

After the above evidence was given the body was viewed by the jury, who unanimously gave it as their opinion that the death was accidental, and no blame to be attributed to any person.

We trust that in future inquests will be held in *all cases* of sudden death, whether from accident or otherwise; we must not forget, however well matters go on at present, the past character of many of our population, and the knowledge that a strict investigation will always be taken may prove a preventative of meditated

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