

Geoffry Pyle

Rushworth Chronicle

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A SAD FATALITY

YOUNG MAN KILLED

A most distressing fatality occurred on Saturday night last, on the Lauderdale road, close to Stanhope. Mr. Geoffry Pyle, aged 22 years, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Pyle, of Stanhope, met his death.

The circumstances under which his young life was so tragically ended were related at an inquest which was held before Mr. E. A. Coyle, J.P., acting coroner, and are related below.

When the sad news reached Rushworth, the residents receive quite a shock, and deep sympathy was expressed for Mr and Mrs Pyle (who are well-known in the town) and the sorrowing family and relatives. The news created a sad feeling amongst the residents Stanhope, who also expressed their deep sympathy.

The deceased had been in bad health some time and had only recently come out of Mooroopna Hospital, where he had had to have one of his legs amputated.

The evidence taken at the inquest was as follows: -

Lionel James Arthur Pyle gave evidence to the effect that he and his brother (the deceased) attended the pictures at Stanhope on Saturday night (29th November), and were riding home on horseback. As they approached the channel bridge near Mr. Zanelli's house he saw the tail-light of a car, which had stopped. They were riding at a fair speed.

As they got close to the bridge the car pulled to the right side of the road ahead of them. As they were going on the bridge witness pulled his horse behind his brothers to pass the car. When his brother's horse got opposite the car, witness heard a bump, and his brother's horse fell. Witness's horse then struck a buggy, which was coming in the opposite direction, was about to pass the car, when his horse collided with the buggy and he was thrown on to the roadway.

When he got up he saw his brother lying on the road. Mr. McCullogh then got out of the buggy and went to where his brother was lying, and put his arms around him. His brother sat up and said "I am winded," and asked for a drink of water. McCullogh gave some to witness's brother and told him to wash his mouth out. Deceased then started to vomit and collapsed. Witness then went in Mr. Zanelli's car for the nurse at Stanhope and returned with her. The nurse attended to his brother until Dr Coutts arrived from Rushworth who said that witness's brother was dead.

When witness heard the bump he saw the buggy. It was a hooded buggy with the hood up. Witness could not pull up when he saw the buggy and his horse struck it almost immediately after his brother's. He did not see a light on the buggy. He afterwards saw a lamp on the buggy. He could not see the buggy coming just before his brother's horse struck it. His horse had a hard mouth and he could not pull it up. After he saw his brother's horse strike the buggy, it was possible his horse struck his brother after he fell.

His brother was an invalid and was suffering from blood poisoning, and he had had his leg amputated below the knee.

Ralph McCulloch gave evidence to the effect that he drove to Kyabram on Saturday night and was returning home with his daughter Janet and Miss Ruby Magill. When he got to Zanelli's bridge about 11.20 p.m. he saw a car on the bridge. The car pulled to the right over the drain. The car circled around and appeared as if it was going to turn on the road in front of witness.

He pulled up his horse when the car got around facing the road. He thought the car stopped to let him pass. He moved his horse on and almost immediately he saw a horse galloping towards him. He pulled his horse towards the direction of the car to try and avoid the horse striking him. At the same time a man on horseback struck the buggy about the shaft and the right shoulder of his horse. The rider's horse appeared to rear back and the rider rolled off at almost the same instant. Another horseman struck witness's horse in the same place. After the second horse struck the buggy, witness got out and saw a man lying on the road. He went over to him and found him doubled up on the road. The man said "I am winded" and asked for a drink of water. He asked Zanelli to get some water and when he was giving deceased the water he recognised him as Geffry Pyle.

After giving him the water deceased started to vomit and collapsed. Witness had a light burning on his buggy that night. The last candle he had burned out about 20 minutes before he came to the bridge. He thought the horses were galloping at full speed, and he did not have time to pull out of the way. He always had lights on his vehicle when driving at night. He took two candles with him when going to Kyabram, which he thought would be sufficient to last until he returned home. It was owing to a little delay at Kyabram before leaving that the candles did not see him home.

Baptiste Zanelli gave evidence that he was returning from the pictures at Stanhope with his mother, sisters and two brothers and stopped at the bridge near his gate to let the passengers out, as he had to go to Rushworth for his father. He could hear horses coming on the road. He pulled his car off the road. As he did so some horsemen galloped over the bridge. They appeared to be galloping at full speed. When they came opposite his car he heard a bump. He turned the car round and threw the headlights on the road. He went over and met Jim Pyle who was holding one horse and saw McCulloch lifting Geoffrey Pyle. (Witness here corroborated the previous evidence.) He went to Stanhope with Jim Pyle and bought out Nurse Buckridge.

Nicholas Zanelli corroborated his brother's evidence.

Nurse Buckridge stated that she was taken to the spot and attended deceased. He was unconscious and had only a thready pulse and slight breathing. She could only get his pulse and intervals until 12.20 a.m. when the pulse then ceased. Dr. Coutts then arrived and said the man was dead.

Dr Coutts stated that in response to a telephone message he went to Stanhope on Saturday night, 29th at 12.15 a.m. He found deceased lying on the road. He found that he was dead. There was an abrasion about 4 inches long and 2 inches wide on the upper part of the abdomen on the right side. From what he was told and judging from the position of the

bruises he was of the opinion that death was due to haemorrhage resulting from rupture of the liver. Bruising on the abdomen such as could have been caused by forces fought

about a customer Marshall gave evidence as to his being called at Stanhope corroborated evidence read the words on the body he examined the deceased horse the next day the horse had recent scratch marks with the hair off the shin on the chest under the neck and a scratch on the outside of the foreleg in his opinion to cease health would not allow him pulling up quickly.

A verdict was returned that the deceased Geoffry Pyle met his death through misadventure.

The funeral took place on Monday last, the remains being interred in the Rushworth Cemetery, was largely attended the members of the Stanhope branch of the G.U.O.O.F. deceased was a member for the remains to the grave. There were a number of floral tributes. The Rev F. C. Boundy officiated at the gravesite.