

C.S.

PORT & MARINE.

(Misc)

SHI/VES/9 # 11

1933.

No. 258/33.

Harbour Master.

SUBJECT.

1933.

3rd November.

DISAPPEARANCE OF CREW OF SCHOONER "PERONELLE"

Previous Paper.

MINUTES.

Minute from Harbour Master of 3/11/33.

1-4.

*Y.M.*

*Submitted.*

*This is a very sad indeed.*

*A. Pres  
14/11/33*

*Hon. Col. Sec.*

*I fear the unfortunate men have lost their lives. Arrangements were made today for the "Perfecto Garcia" to again proceed to the scene for the purpose of making a thorough search and if possible recover the bodies. The Harbour Master arranged for the Pilot, Mr. B. Ratchiffe to accompany the*

Subsequent Paper.

Search party. I also saw Mr. Ratcliffe  
who informed me he was taking  
one grappling gear.

2. I received this morning  
the attached letter from Captain  
Alexander of H.M.S. "Dauntless."  
Kindly prepare acknowledgment for my  
signature. Later send letters to  
relatives expressing the sympathy  
of Captain Alexander, O'Brien and  
Ship's Company of H.M.S. "Dauntless."  
I am writing personal letters of  
sympathy to the relatives.

McH  
4. 2 x 1. 33.

Letter to relatives of crew of schooner "Bronelle" of 4/11/33. (6)  
Letter to Captain E. O. Alexander of 4/11/33. (4)

Hon. Col. Sec.

Thank you, letter to  
Captain Alexander R. N. signed.

McH  
3. XI. 33

P.A.  
8/11/33

Letter from Mrs. R. J. Davis of 10/11/33 (8)

y/E.

Submitted.

C. J. J. J. J.  
for C.S.  
12/11/33.

Hon. Col. See.

I do ~~not~~ see any further report on the further search just concluded by the "Perfect Garcia." Ask the Harbour Master to supply report.

2. I should be glad if Mr. House (Ag. Magistrate re) would hold an enquiry as soon as possible concerning the loss of the men.

HC  
13. XI. 33.

Ag. Magistrate,  
Harbour Master.

Referred to you.

A. J. J.  
13/11/33.

Hon. Col. See.

Report of inquiry attached.

A. J. J.

Ag. Magistrate  
17 Nov. 1933

Harbour Master

To you please A. J. J.

Hon Col Sec.

Report on further search by  
"Perfecto Garcia" is put up herein. I regret  
that this was not submitted earlier.

*[Signature]*  
for Harbour Master.

17. XI. 33

Report from Ag. Magistrate. 17/11/33.

10-12.

Yfks. Submitted.

*[Signature]*  
for Sec.  
20/11/33.

Hon. Col. Sec.

Thank you Sir. Something  
suitable might be published in  
"Penguin" " That as a result  
of the Enquiry held on re. re "  
Mr. Thomas had better see Mr.  
Hoare about it.

*[Signature]*

20. XI. 33.

Editor "Penguin"

will you please take action  
accordingly?

*[Signature]*  
for Sec.  
21/11/33.

Hon Col Sec.

Inquiry published in  
Penguin 23. 11. 33.  
Mr. Thomas.

(13) Letter to Capt. C.O. Alexander of 25/11/33.

JW

Submitted with letter for favour  
of Your Excellency's signature.

C.O. Alexander  
for  
27/11/33

Hon. Col. Sec.

Thank you signed.

met

27. XI. 33.

PA  
27/11/33

(14) Letter from Mrs R. J. Davis 19/1/33  
(15) " " Mrs R. Davis (Undated)

PA  
11/12/33

Hon. Col. Sec.

I have asked for the  
paper so as to make a reference  
on it to no 8/34 of the legal file,  
which deals with an inquest on  
the remains of two human bodies  
found at Volunteer Lagoon on 11 and  
15 April. One of these bodies was  
identified at the inquest as that  
of W. A. Whitney and it is obvious from  
the medical evidence that the other must  
be that of R. C. Davis. A. J. [Signature]

A. J. Magistral

Hon Col Sec.

The delay in submitting this paper since writing the above minute is due to its having been sent to H.H. the C.I. attached to the original paper.

A. H. Moran

5 May 1934

YE

Recently certain human remains were found at the Volunteer Lagoon. An Inquest was held and the proceedings have already been submitted to YE.

The remains of the late W. A. Whitney were identified, the other remains were claimed by the relatives as being those of R. E. Davis, after hearing the medical evidence.

MCH  
a. c. s.  
7. V. 34.

✓ J. M. G.  
8. 5. 34,

P. A.  
MCH  
8. V. 34.

Letter from Mr W. J. Meatasney 18/6/34

(1677)

e. e. charge to poor relief.

MCH  
19. 6. 34.

Hon. Director Public Works.

Please state earnings of E. Whitney for the past 4 weeks.

MCH  
— an es.  
22.6.34.

Hon. Secy. Secretary.

wages paid to E. Whitney

week ending	Hours worked	wages paid
30 May 1934	41 hrs @ 1/2	£2-7-10
6 June "	24 "	1-8-0
13 " "	32 "	1-17-4
20 " "	23 1/2 "	1-7-2
	<u>120 1/4</u>	<u>£7-0-4</u>

E. Whitney has worked 120 1/4 hrs during the past 4 weeks from a possible 175 hours.

Rent is owing as follows:-

May 10/-  
June £24/-

L. B. White  
for L. B. P.  
23/6/34

The ac of Mr. Mc Atasney has been paid against Charitable relief in conformity with an arrangement I made with Mr. Mc Atasney at the time.

I fear it will be impossible to recover the amount from E. Whitney who is already heavily involved in debt.

MCH  
— an es.  
25.6.34.

✓ J. M. G.  
25.6.34.

No.

(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute, the above Number and the date may be quoted).

MINUTE.

3rd November, 19 33

From The Harbour Master,

Stanley.

To

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

I beg to submit the following report relative to the schooner "Peronelle", which left Stanley for Volunteer Lagoon on Sunday, the 22nd October, 1933, with a crew of four, namely:- R.J.Davis (owner), Roy Davis, T.Binnie, Junr., and Albert Whitney.

The vessel was expected back in port on Friday, the 27th October, but at 8.15.p.m. on Tuesday the 31st October, I received a visit from Mr. T.Paice, father-in-law of the owner of the "Perronelle", who informed me that owing to the non-return of the craft, anxiety for the safety of the crew was being felt by the relatives. It was decided to telephone to Mr. T.Robson at Port Louis North, asking him to be good enough to send over to Johnson's Harbour with the request that a rider be despatched to Volunteer Lagoon in order to attempt to throw some light on the cause of the long absence of the vessel. Unfortunately, although every effort was made it was impossible to get through to Port Louis by telephone on the Tuesday evening, but eventually Messrs Robsons were communicated with about 11.a.m. on the following morning. Our request was readily complied with, and early on the morning of Thursday, the 2nd of November, we received news that Volunteer Lagoon had been visited, the searchers reporting as follows: The "Peronelle" was lying at anchor outside the lagoon between Volunteer Point and Eagle Point about 400 yards from the South shore. The remains of the "pram" (i.e.boat belonging to the schooner) were found to be strewn along the Southern shore for a distance of about 200 yards, just outside the lagoon (see diagram). There was no sign of life.


On receipt of this disturbing information arrangements were made for the sch. "Perfecto Garcia" to proceed to the scene, with Mr. Bert Ratcliffe, Tugmaster, G.L. "Penguin", on board. The "Perfecto Garcia" left Stanley about 1.p.m. on Thursday, the 2nd November, and arrived back in port at approximately 11.p.m. the same night, bringing in tow



the "Peronelle". Mr. Ratcliffe reports that on arrival at the lagoon about 4.p.m., he and others went aboard the schooner, found her devoid of any living presence, but to all appearances in a normal condition indicating that the vessel was not vacated hurriedly. The sails were fast, there was one anchor out with about 30 fathoms of chain. Several eating and drinking utensils were lying on the deck just by the cabin, by the condition of which it was evident that a meal had been taken by persons just prior to leaving the ship. The "tear-off" calendar stood at October 22nd --the day on which the "Peronelle" left Stanley; a half of a sheep was hanging in the rigging, four untouched loaves of bread in the cupboard besides other stores, and the heel of a loaf on the deck with the cups &c. There were only 4 or 5 (jackass)eggs on board.

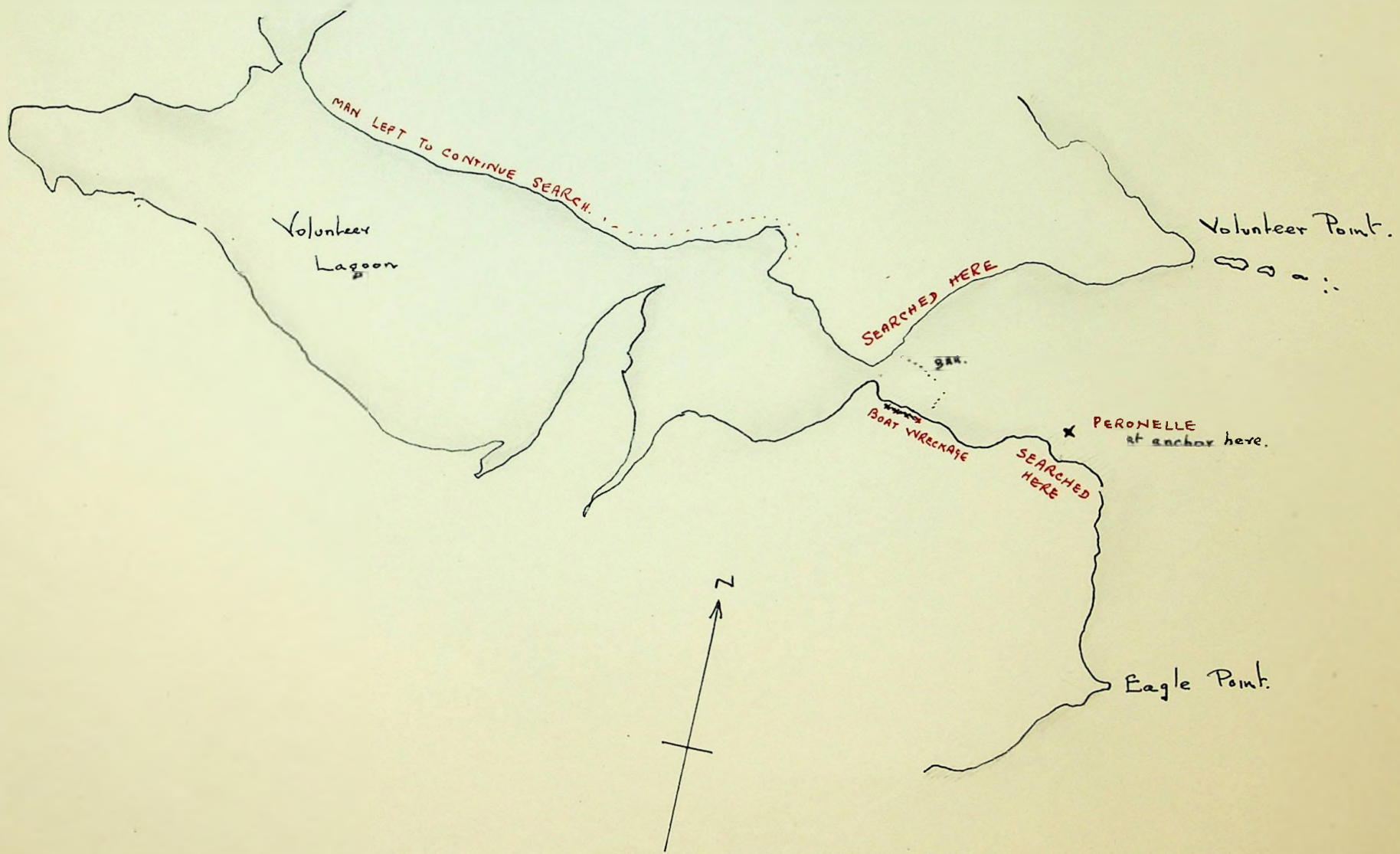
The Tugmaster and the other members of the party then searched the beaches north and south where marked on the plan. The remains of the "pram" were found as expected strewn along the South side. The largest part was about 16 ft by 2ft and consisted of the bottom boards of the pram with painter attached. No oars or any articles of clothing were to be seen. At 6.p.m., after a thorough search lasting two hours, the party commenced the return journey to Stanley, leaving one man, Andreas Bonner on the North side of the lagoon, to continue the search. The "Peronelle" could not be sailed owing to a fault in the steering gear and the mainsail being torn, consequently she was taken in tow. Stanley was reached shortly before 11.p.m.

I am informed that men from Johnson's Harbour are carrying on the search along the shores of the lagoon, and Mr. Andreas Bonner is still there.

  
for Harbour Master.

P.S. Certificate re the sealing-up of the vessel is attached.





Stanley, Falkland Islands,

3rd November, 1933.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that in the joint presence of each other, we have to-day sealed up the hatches (two) and cabins (two) of the schooner "Peronelle".

*Alfred Seal*

.....  
for Harbour Master

*S. M. Stanley*

.....  
Chief Constable

*A. Ratcliffe*

.....  
Tugmaster,  
G.L. "Penguin"

H.M.S. "DAUNTLESS",

at Port Stanley.

5th November, 1933.

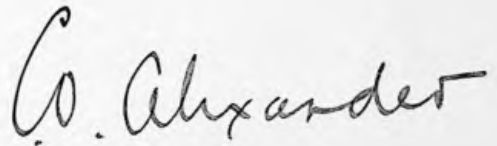
Sir,

As I understand that there is now no hope of the four missing men being alive I should be very grateful if you would convey the sympathy of all on board H.M.S. "Dauntless" to their relatives.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Alexander".

C A P T A I N,  
Royal Navy.

His Excellency the Acting Governor,  
Port Stanley.

258/33.

7th November,

35. (6)

Madam,  
Sir,

I am directed by the Acting Governor to convey to you, on behalf of Captain C. O. Alexander, the Officers and Ship's Company of H.M.S. "Dauntless", an expression of their sincere sympathy on the irreparable loss of your two sons husband on or about the 22nd of October last.  
son

I am,

Madam,  
Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*(sgd.) A. I. Hewitt*

for Colonial Secretary.

Mr. E. Whitney.  
Mr. R. Davis.  
Mrs. R. J. Davis.  
Mrs. T. Binnie.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY.

7th November, 1953.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th of November, 1953, and to inform you that an expression of the sympathy of all on board H.M.S. "Dauntless" has been conveyed to the relatives of the four missing men of the schooner "Peronelle".

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*M. Craigie Harkness*

Acting Governor.

Captain C. O. Alexander, R.N.,  
H.M.S. "Dauntless",  
at STANLEY.

Stanley  
10<sup>th</sup> November 1933.

The Honourable  
Colonial Secretary.

Sir.

I respectfully beg you to convey to Captain C.O. Alexander, the Officers, & Ships Company of H.M.S. "Dauntless" my sincerest gratitude for there kind message of sympathy.

I am

Sir

Your obedient servant  
Mrs R J Davis.

No. 258/33

MINUTE.

(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute the above Number and the date may be quoted).

17th November, 19 33

*From*

Harbour Master  
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,  
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

*To* The Hon. Colonial Secretary,  
Stanley.

Further to my minute of the 3rd November, 1933, on the subject of the schooner "Peronelle", I beg to submit a report in connection with a second visit to Volunteer Lagoon of the "Perfecto Garcia" in quest of the missing men.

As directed by His Excellency the Acting Governor, arrangements were made for the "Perfecto Garcia" to leave Stanley on the morning of Sunday, November the 5th, for the scene of the tragedy. This she did, taking with her six persons, amongst them Mr. A.E. Ratcliffe, Government Pilot. Any male relatives of the missing were given the opportunity of proceeding on the expedition. Instructions were given that a thorough search of the coasts was to be made, and grappling gear to be used wherever possible. Four or five days was the period of time for which the party was told to carry out the search, unless any discoveries rendered it unnecessary to remain so long.

The "Perfecto Garcia" arrived back in Stanley at noon on Thursday, the 9th of November, having been absent just over four days. Unfortunately, although an extensive search had been made of the north and south beaches outside and inside the lagoon, no discovery had been made of anything or anybody, other than had been found on the first trip, saving that the Penguin eggs for which the "Peronelle" went out had not been touched. (These were brought in on the "Perfecto Garcia" and have been delivered into the care of Mr. T. Paice, father-in-law of Mr. R. J. Davis.) The anchor which was used for the pram was not found. Grappling was carried out, but with great difficulty.

Mr. Andreas Bonner, who had volunteered to remain out at the Lagoon on the first excursion, returned to Stanley in the "Perfecto Garcia" on this, the second occasion.

*Andreas Bonner*



Magistrate's Office,  
Stanley.

17th November 1933

Sir,

I have the honour to report that in accordance with instructions I held an Inquiry concerning the loss of the four men of the schooner "Peronelle" on Friday the 17th November 1933 at 10 a.m.

2. The following witnesses gave evidence:

- Mr. Richard Davis, father of the owner of the "Peronelle" and of one of the crew
- Mr. A.W. Beardmore, *representing the* Acting Harbour Master
- Mr. A.E. Ratcliffe, Tugmaster, Government Launch "Penguin"
- Mr. John Davis master of the schooner "Perfecto Garcia"
- Mr. Andreas Bonner.

3. The evidence showed that the "Peronelle" left Stanley on Sunday the 22nd October 1933 bound for Volunteer Lagoon for the purpose of collecting penguin eggs. There were on board

- Richard James Davis, age 33, married
- Thomas Binnie, age 29, married
- William Albert Whitney, age 20, single
- Roy Charles Davis, age 17, single.

The vessel was expected to be away for about a week, but on the 31st October, after nine days had elapsed,

The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

anxiety

anxiety was felt, and a message was sent to Johnson's Harbour (on which station Volunteer Lagoon is situated) asking the Manager to investigate. Early on the 2nd November he reported that there appeared to be no sign of life on the "Peronelle" and that the schooner's boat was lying broken up on the beach. Arrangements were immediately made for the schooner "Perfecto Garcia" to proceed to the place, and she left Stanley the same afternoon, under the command of Mr. John Davis and with Mr. A.E. Ratcliffe, Tugmaster of the G.L. "Penguin", and others, on board. The "Perfecto Garcia" returned to Stanley that night with the "Peronelle" in tow. Mr. Ratcliffe and others had gone on board the "Peronelle" on arrival at the Lagoon and had found nobody on board. There were signs of a meal having been eaten, the tear-off calendar showed the date 22nd October, there were four loaves of bread and part of another (six loaves were taken from Stanley), and a supply of cooked and uncooked meat and other eatables. There were only four or five penguin eggs. The owner's log book or diary was found, and had the appearance of having been regularly made up. The last entry was dated 21 October; the date 22 October had been written ready for that day's entry. Mr. Ratcliffe and others went on shore and searched the beach, finding the remains of the boat but no oars and no sign whatever of the men. One of the party, Mr. Andreas Bonner, was left to continue the search. The "Peronelle" was towed back instead of being sailed because her steering gear and sail was damaged. The witness was of the opinion that this damage had been done after the "Peronelle" arrived at the lagoon.

4. The "Perfecto Garcia" with a search party on board returned to the lagoon on Sunday the 5th November. A thorough search was made of the north and south beaches at

the entrance to the lagoon and of the lagoon itself, but without any new discovery. The party returned to Stanley on Thursday the 9th November.

5. Mr. A.E.Ratcliffe and Mr. John Davis, both of whom are well acquainted with the locality, were of the opinion that the four men had left the schooner in the pram and that between the ship and the shore the boat had capsized and the four occupants had been drowned; and that the disaster occurred on the day they arrived at the lagoon, the 22nd October. There was a strong southeast wind at the time which would make a rough sea. The pram was provided with only a pair of oars, and if one got broken or lost the boat would be unmanageable.

6. It seems to me that in the absence of direct evidence of what happened, the facts stated by the witnesses - e.g. the plentiful supply of food on the schooner, the date on the tear-off calendar, the date of the last entry in the log book, the absence of penguin eggs on board, the wreckage of the boat on the beach - point to the likelihood that the four men were drowned while going from the schooner to the shore on the 22nd October 1933.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*A. R. Ratcliffe*

Acting Stipendiary Magistrate



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY.

25th November, 1953.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

No. 258/53.

Sir,

With reference to my letter of the 7th of November, 1953, I have the honour to inform you that the relatives of the four missing men of the schooner "Peronelle" have requested that their sincerest gratitude should be conveyed to all on board H.M.S. "Dauntless" for the kind message of sympathy sent to them in their recent bereavement.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Acting Governor.

Captain C. O. Alexander, R.N.,  
H.M.S. "Dauntless",  
at STANLEY.

Stanley  
10<sup>th</sup> November 1933.

To, His Excellency the Acting Governor.

The Hon. Mr. C. Craigie Halkett.

Dear Sir

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of sympathy & to say that I very much appreciate your words of consolation.

May I take this opportunity of thanking you for the kindest & consideration shown us on our greivous loss

Yours sincerely

Mrs. R. J. Davis.

Sea View House  
Stanley

Your Excellency,  
In reply to your kind letter of last Sunday I would like to take this opportunity of thanking your Excellency for your feeling words and to say how deeply we all appreciate the sympathy you have shown towards us in our irreparable loss.

I am Sir  
Yours R Davis

Stanley  
18<sup>th</sup> June 34

The Colonial Government

D<sup>r</sup> to W. & M<sup>r</sup> Atkinson  
Undertakers

To

Coffin & arrangements for funeral of the late  
Albert Whitney

Rs 3 - 13 - 0

Stawley  
June 18<sup>th</sup> 34

Sir

I beg to inform you that Mr. E. Whitney is unable to pay my account for the funeral expenses of his Son's remains

As your instructions were to the effect, that if he could not pay, the Government would be responsible; I beg to enclose my A/c of £3-13-0

I have the honour  
to be Sir,  
Your obedient servant  
W. J. McAloney

Now

Mr. C. Craigie - Halkett. O. B. E.  
Act Col Secretary