

C.S.

<u>PUBLIC WORKS.</u>	
(Misc.)	
No.	178/32.

1932.

C. S. C.	SUBJECT.
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1932.

15th June.

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Previous Paper.

Accident sustained by Mr. W. McPherson while blasting rock in the Government quarry.

MINUTES.

1. Telegram from the Director of Public Works. 15/6/32.
2. Telegram from His Excellency the Governor 14/6/32
3. Telegram to His Excellency the Governor 15/6/32
4. Letter to Mrs McPherson. 15/6/32.
5. Minute from Genl. W. 15/6/32.
6. Telegram from H.E. the Governor, 15/6/32.

48. ✓ Dr. Edmund, Mr. Harding, the Native and the Hospital staff deserve warm praise for the courageous and steadfast manner in which they faced the ordeal of this most distressing case.

I submit draft letters of appreciation.

July 17.6.32

*How. C.S.*  
*With slight amendment*  
*Approved*  
*J.P.G.*  
*18-6-32*

Subsequent Paper.

Letter to Mr S. W. Harding. 20/6/32. 7.

Letter to Dr. J. G. Edmunds. 20/6/32. 8.

6/2. 28. 6. 32.

1/2 21. 6. 32.

Letter for Hon. D.P.O. 27. 6. 32 - pels 10-9.

9. 2. Schittul for information.

2. I will ask Hon. D.P.O. to  
submit his recommendations in regard  
to future practice to be followed in  
such blasting operations as are necessary.

1/2

28. 6. 32.

Hon. C.S.

Noted:  
yes please, carry  
out the suggestion  
re the recommendations  
of the Hon. D.P.O.

J.G.  
28. 6. 32

The following verdict was returned by the Jury on the 25th of June, 1932:

"that the said William Thomas McPherson came to his death by :

"Heart failure following shock from "injuries sustained by an explosion of "a charge of gelignite in the Government "quarry on the 14th day of June, 1932, "due to the lack of instructions and "knowledge to carry out the dangerous "work of blasting,"

and further recommend:

In future trained men only should carry out all operations of charging and blasting, and that full precautions should be taken in general with explosives.

*J. D. P. G.*

*Accordingly, please,*

*to your recommendations as*

*to future practice.*

*[Signature]*

*29. 6. 32.*

*Newman editor Vetch L*

*N.P. 185/32.*

*P.A. [Signature]  
9, 7, 32*

Minutes from Registrar of 23/8/32

11-12.

J. S. Schiller. ? A copy

to be supplied.

Ind

Hon C.S.

yes: a copy  
can be supplied

J. S.  
26.8.32

Registrar

Please note approval.

J. S.

25.8.32.

Red 13.

H.C.S.

Copy supplied

J. S.  
Registrar.  
26 Aug 1932

P. J. Ind

26.8.32

# GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

FALKLAND ISLANDS AND DEPENDENCIES.

## RECEIVED.

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
21	Lafonia	21	00.30	15/6/32

To

Colonial Secretary Stanley.

The Director of Public Works regrets to hear of accident in quarry please convey sympathy to injured.

Roberts.

Time

# GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

FALKLAND ISLANDS AND DEPENDENCIES.

## RECEIVED.

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
20	Lafonia	24	00.30	15/6/32

To

Colonial Secretary Stanley.

His Excellency regrets to hear of the serious blasting accident please convey sympathy and keep him informed of patients progress.

Governor.

Time

# GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

FALKLAND ISLANDS AND DEPENDENCIES.

## SENT.

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
				15/6/32.

To

GOVERNOR

"Lafonia"

Much regret to report that William McPherson died in hospital at 4 p.m. yesterday as the result of his injuries after an operation had been successfully performed

Secretary.

Time

178/32.

15th June, 32.

Madam,

I am directed by the Governor to convey to you the expression of His Excellency's sincere sympathy with you in the sad loss of your son on the 14th of June, last.

2. I am to add that His Excellency trusts that you may be able to take comfort in the knowledge that everything possible was done by the Principal Medical Officer and the Hospital staff to save him for you and to alleviate the suffering which he bore so bravely.

I am,

Madam,

Your obedient servant,



Colonial Secretary.

Mrs. McPherson,  
STANLEY.



No.

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

MINUTE.

June 15<sup>th</sup> 1932

From *Aq. P. 17.0.*

To

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

May I bring to the notice of His Excellency the Governor and to yourself my admiration and thanks for the skill and courageous co-operation displayed by Mr. S. W. Harding, the Matron and the Staff of the Hospital in the case of the late William Mr. Pherson, without which the necessary "heroic" measures could not even have been contemplated.

*H. P. Edmunds.*

DECODE.

6

TELEGRAM.

*From* ..... His Excellency the Governor.

*To* ..... The Hon. Colonial Secretary.

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*Despatched* :            15th June            19 32            *Time* : 23.00

*Received* :            16th June            19 32            *Time* : 10.30

Please convey my deepest sympathy to the mother and relatives of  
W. McPherson.

Governor.

178/32.

20th June,

32.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that the Governor has learned with much appreciation of the capable and courageous services willingly afforded by you in support of the Principal Medical Officer in connection with the operation performed on the late Mr. W. MacPherson in the King Edward Memorial Hospital on the 14th of June, last.

2. I am to express to you His Excellency's sincere thanks for these services which were not only of the greatest value in the emergency but also were such as you would not be called upon to afford in the normal course of your duties.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



Colonial Secretary.

S.W. Harding Esq., L.D.S.,  
Dental Surgeon,  
(through Hon. P.M.O.)

173/32.

20th June,

32.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that the Governor has learned with great satisfaction of the splendid service rendered by yourself, by Mr. S.W. Harding, Dental Surgeon, and by the Nurse-Matron and the staff of the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in the sad case of the late Mr. W. MacPherson.

2. I am to convey to you personally His Excellency's warm admiration of the resolute manner in which you faced this sudden emergency demanding both skill and courage. His Excellency is fully assured that everything possible was done to succour the unfortunate man and feels a deep sympathy for you in that your devoted efforts should not have met with the success deserved.

3. I am to request that you will convey to the Nurse-Matron and to the staff of the Hospital His Excellency's high commendation of their steadfast support in the emergency.

4. I am also to request that you will hand the enclosed letter to Mr. Harding.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. Glyn Edmunds, Esq., L.M.S.S.A.  
Acting Principal Medical Officer,  
STANLEY.

Colonial Secretary.

No.  
(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute the above Number and the date may be quoted.)

MINUTE.

27th June. 1932.

*From*

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,  
  
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

*To*

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Hon; Colonial Secretary,

It is with deep regret that I have to report the fatal accident to Mr William McPherson, whilst filling a bore hole with gelignite in the quarry at Magazine Valley. I was unavoidably absent from Stanley at the time but as far as can be ascertained the accident occurred between 10-30 and 10-40 a.m. on the 14th of June 1932.

Mr McPherson was engaged in the quarry at Magazine Valley on a ledge about 6 feet from the ground, inserting and pressing home gelignite into a bore hole reported to be about 2' 9" to 3' 0" deep, which had been bored vertically. The gelignite "pills" had been broken up and he was putting the lumps into the hole and pressing them home when the explosion occurred, Denis Lehen who was assisting and standing on the same ledge was handing him the pieces of gelignite to put into the bore hole. It would appear that the explosion occurred whilst he was pressing the gelignite down with a wooden broom-handle. Mr McPherson received severe injuries to both hands and the face, and D. Lehen was thrown off and backwards from the ledge by percussion but was unhurt

Mr McPherson was immediately taken to the hospital on a stretcher which was in the shed at Magazine Valley, and I regret to say that he died during the afternoon.

As far as can be ascertained Mr McPherson was carrying out the same routine work in regard to blasting as has been done for years past and it is stated that neither of the men were smoking at the time or previous to the accident.

A metal rod was not used for pressing the gelignite /in

in the bore hole and Mr Lehen reports that the gelignite was being pressed home in the hole with the broom handle and was not being rammed, the usual procedure in charging the bore hole was being carried out, the hole had been cleaned out and a piece of bagging pushed around the hole to absorb some of the moisture.

The 2 oz gelignite cartridges had been broken in pieces and were being pressed home when the accident occurred, the primer cartridge with the detonator and fuse attached was away from the hole laying on a ledge higher up.

It was the intention to charge the hole with six cartridges (12 ozs) of gelignite, the contents of about four cartridges were in the hole when the explosion occurred. The remainder of the broken pieces of gelignite, together with the primer cartridge with safety fuse and detonator attached, part of the broom handle used, and also the box containing gelignite from which the cartridges used in this bore hole had been taken, were taken to the Public Works Office and have since been removed to a place of safety

The quantity of explosive it was intended to use in the hole is considered to be the correct amount for a hole which Mr Lehen estimated at 2' 9" to 3' 0" deep.

Mr McPherson has had previous experience in quarrying and blasting, having been employed on this work and in the same quarry for some time, and it is estimated that he has fired approximately 500 charges, and for this reason he was put in charge of the gang of men. The record of Mr McPherson's service with this Government is as follows :-

- 24th Oct 1930 to 26th Mar 1931. Employed on peat cutting and on North Camp Road.
- 10th Apr, 1931 to 1st July, 1931. Transfer of W/T Station.
- 14th July 1931 to 4th Nov, 1931 Quarrying.
- 9th Nov, 1931 to 29th Dec, 1931 Peat cutting.
- 10th Feb, 1932 to 14th June 1932. Quarrying.

*G. Roberts,*  
Director of Public Works.

KELVIN STORE,

PORT STANLEY.

August 23rd 1932. 19

Sir,

On behalf of Mrs Mc.Pheron I hereby beg to apply for a copy of the evidence of the inquiry held by the Coroner into the cause of the death of William Thomas Mc.Pheron.

I shall deem it a great favour if I can have this copy of evidence for the mail leaving on the 1st September.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*B.R. Watson*

Attorney for Mrs Mc.Pheron.

The Registrar,

Stanley.

234/32

MINUTE.

27th August, 1932.

To

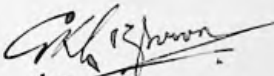
From The Registrar,

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley.

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

I attach a letter received from Captain D. R. Watson asking for a copy of the evidence taken at the inquest on the death of William Thomas McPherson. If approved I shall supply the copy asked for free of charge.

  
Registrar.



FAIKLAND ISLANDS.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT,

Stanley,

26th August, 1932.

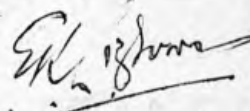
Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 23rd of August, I beg to enclose herewith a copy of the depositions taken at the Inquest held on the 16th, 24th and 25th June, 1932.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

  
Registrar General.

Capt. D. E. Watson,

Stanley.