

DEATH OF CAPTAIN CALVERT.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

July 6.
An inquest was held on the 5th instant, by Charles Mellish, Esq., coroner, and a jury of whom Mr. John McWilliams, of Papakura, was the foreman, to ascertain the cause of the death of the late Capt. Augustus Bressan Calvert, who came to his death on the morning of the 3rd instant, under circumstances which fully appear in the following evidence, taken after the coroner and jury had viewed the body and the place where the fatal accident occurred:—

Charlotte Calvert, being sworn, stated as follows: I am now the widow of the late Augustus Bressan Calvert, whose body has now been shown to the jury. On Monday, when I heard the report of a gun in the front of this house, and a shout which I knew to be my husband's voice, I immediately ran out from the front sitting-room. The deceased called out "I am shot." I asked him who did it, and if he did it accidentally. He said, "Yes, myself." He said that in pulling the gun through the rails it had caught, and went off. I again asked the question if it was really accidental, and he said as he hoped to be saved it was. He further said, "If I had intended to do it, I should have done it through the brain." The reason that I asked the question was that I could see no one near; and knowing how careful and expert he was about fire-arms, I looked upon an accident as being almost impossible. The deceased was daily in the habit of going out with his gun, and generally left it in the verandah in front of his house. He cautioned me about nine o'clock on Monday morning that the gun was loaded. He told me that John, the servant, had informed him, and I myself heard the servant tell him that there were two pheasants in the paddock. I heard him ask John in what direction the pheasants were, and I heard my husband say he had left the gun at the opposite side of the paddock, laying it up against the fence at the gate, and that rain having commenced he went down to bring the gun out of the wet, and that in drawing it through the panels the gun exploded. He said that at the instant he thought some one else had shot him, until he saw the smoke, and then he knew it to be his own gun. This occurrence took place about the hour of twelve o'clock, on Monday, the 3rd July instant. I then called on a man who was working in the paddock to come to my assistance. I asked him to assist in carrying the deceased into the house, which he did, and we laid him on the sofa, where the body now lies. I looked at the wound in his side. My husband asked me what it looked like. I told him, and asked him what was the best thing to do. He answered, "Nothing but keep me quiet." I then sent for a doctor, and in about an hour and a quarter Dr. Welby attended. The deceased asked me before his arrival to give him half a tea spoonful of brandy in cold water, which I gave him. Dr. Rayner was also in attendance, but from this out Captain Calvert gradually sank until he expired yesterday evening, at half-past four o'clock. Captain Calvert was sixty years old last March. He had been in his usual state of health and spirits previous to the accident. He told me the gun was loaded with shot. The gun produced belonged to Captain Calvert.

John McDougall, on his oath, stated as follows: I am a labouring man, and I was in the employment of the late Captain Calvert for a month. I went down on Monday morning last to the field in front of the house. I went for a post, and when I came up to the gate I saw a gun lying close to it against the fence. After this I told Captain Calvert that I had seen two pheasants in the park. I was at the rear of the house, lifting a stick, when I heard a shot, and immediately after I heard Mr. Calvert cry out to me. When I came up I saw Captain Calvert lying near the gate. He had his arms round the mistress's neck. I then went for the doctor to Papakura, and when I came back I saw the gun where it had been in the morning, near the gate, but in a different position. I helped to carry Captain Calvert into the house, where the mistress and I laid him on the sofa, and I then went for the doctor. William Montague Hall, being sworn, stated as follows: I am a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in England. On Monday, the 3rd July instant, shortly after one o'clock, I was sent for from Captain Calvert's. I arrived here at his house shortly after two p.m., and found the deceased lying on his back on a couch in the next room. He was quite sensible. I examined him, and found an oval wound, about an inch and a half long, and about two inches below the false ribs. The edges of the wound were much blackened, as if from powder recently burnt or exploded. The wound passed upwards into the muscles of the back, where a mass of shot could be felt, and below the surface of the wound there was an opening into the cavity of the abdomen, exposing the intestines. One grain of shot was extracted from the wound, which I saw, and it was No. 5, or about the size of that now extracted from the right barrel of the gun now produced, which is the same gun that was found in my presence near where the accident occurred. Captain Calvert died about 5 o'clock yesterday evening from the effects of the gunshot wound of the abdomen, as above described. Previous to his death, and on first seeing him, Captain Calvert told me the following, namely, that the gun was placed against the slip-rail, the butt resting in the ditch, and the muzzle pointed towards him; that he took hold of the gun just below the muzzle, for the purpose of shooting a pheasant. Both hands, he said, were down on the muzzles; but as he raised the gun it exploded, and he fell back. The last witness took up the gun and handed it to me. Both of the caps were split, and one barrel only loaded.

The jury without hesitation by their verdict found, "That the deceased Augustus Bressan Calvert came to his death from a gunshot wound, accidentally discharged from his own fowling-piece, on Monday, the 3rd July, 1865, at his own residence, Fern Hill, Haupu, in the district of Papakura and colony aforesaid, and that the same happened accidentally, casually, and by misfortune, and not otherwise."

The remains of this lamented gentleman will be conveyed at twelve o'clock this day, from his own house, Wairoa Road (where the inquest was held), for interment in Papakura, a message by telegraph having been despatched to Otahuhu to solicit the attendance of a clergyman of the Church of England to perform the service. And this reminds me of the duty of paying a tardy tribute of esteem and affection to the memory of our late pastor, the Rev. John Morgan, whose clerical duties so often brought him in contact with the inhabitants of these and more remote districts, and whose attendance at the shortest notice, notwithstanding the failing state of his health, was always to be depended upon. I might, indeed, say of him in the words of Goldsmith—

That in his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all.

PAPAKURA ASSOCIATION.
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
July 6.
The usual monthly meeting of the members of this association was held yesterday, at the Papakura Hotel, Mr. Wm. Hay in the chair; but no business of importance was transacted beyond getting the subscriptions of parties who had made themselves responsible for the deficiency of funds to pay for the monument erected to the memory of the late Mr. Joseph Middlemore; and a resolution was proposed and carried by Mr. Edward King, in reference to the sale day of the cattle market at Papakura, calculated to prevent any collision with the plans adopted by the meeting lately held in Drury in reference to the days of sale in that town.

THE GOLD-PROSPECTING AT THE THAMES.
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
KAUABRANGA, June 27.
Since my last communication, dated the 19th inst., the civil commissioner of the district has been applied to for an order, by the Kaitake Creek to the Thames, the gold prospectors having found gold in sufficient quantity to induce them to work the ground. The bottom of the paddock is not yet reached, but fine gold has been washed out from where the gravel was met, about three feet from the surface to a depth of ten feet, that is, seven feet of waste, which can be easily put through a sieve-box. The gold is found in the gravel, and is of a better quality, so far as the appearance is concerned, than of a round character, though small. Should similar wash be met with further in from the creek on the flat, the area may become very extended, but as yet I am not authorised to report beyond that contained in my former letter and the favourable result mentioned above. Until you hear further, I would not recommend any person coming here with a certainty of finding gold. The ground the prospectors have worked is certainly not producing that which ought to create a rush, and it would be most unadvisable for men to proceed hither who are employed in receiving weekly wages for their labour elsewhere; and should those who are idle contemplate coming here, I should say to them, bring tea, flour, sugar, &c.; the Maori can supply potatoes and pork. I shall keep you informed of the result by every opportunity leaving this place for Auckland. To Tapanui, the chief, will place no obstacle in the way of men coming here, provided they have the sanction of the Government.

The Rev. Mr. Grace sent for me a few days ago, to sit with him, as he felt very unwell, and was receiving little or no assistance from the natives. When I went to him at his house, which was situated on a hill, he found him so ill that he easily prevailed on me to procure a white boat to convey him to the Miranda Redoubt, on the opposite side of the Gulf, where he could obtain medical assistance. The boat was manned by four white men and a Maori. The residence of a clergyman is much required in this district; otherwise I am certain the religious principles inculcated in the children, by their assistant, the schoolmaster, will gradually decay.

There is no native intelligence of importance to communicate.
July 1.
The gold-prospecting party have bottomed a hole on the flat. The first few feet taken out was easy sinking through a clay and sand deposit, when a mass of boulders was met with as usual; but in this instance fine gold resulted from each dish washed, which continued to a depth of 16 feet, getting coarser as the sinking proceeded. The prospectors were disappointed at not finding a deposit on the bottom. Had the gold been deposited in six inches of wash-dirt, instead of being disseminated through eight feet of boulders, the flat would pay well to work, as it is the quantity of water encountered and the time and labour expended that will render the working it out of the question.

I am told that a bend of the creek is to be tried, over which it had previously formed a current. The banks of the present bed have yielded a fair prospect in the neighbourhood.

The weather has of late been much against prospecting, but it is now looking more favourable.

ALEXANDRA.
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
June 29.
The Brigadier-General paid us another visit this morning. Armed natives have been observed during the last few days, loitering around Kihikihik; a sharp look-out is kept there. We have not seen anything of the kind in this neighbourhood. It is rumoured that the native reported to be "shot" was not even touched.

It is expected that some bargains will be made at the forthcoming sale of the Commissariat Transport Corps stock, which is to take place shortly at Te Awaunui.

On Tuesday, the 27th instant, the unmarried settlers at this post gave a grand ball to the married settlers and their families, in commemoration of the first anniversary of our location here. Notwithstanding the unpropitious state of the weather, 100 persons were present, the fair sex mistaking very early in the morning, and the guests were very tastefully decorated with New Zealand laurel and other evergreens, arranged in festoons; the top of the apartment being ornamented with a device on a pink ground, expressing "Welcome." The band of Her Majesty's 40th Regiment provided for the orchestral portion of the entertainment, which was well executed, and the evening was most enjoyable. The fact of its being a Settlers' Ball, and not a military ball, was never overlooked for a moment; and it was extremely gratifying to observe the officers and their families associating with the men and their families. All went merrily as a marriage bell, until about 3 a.m. When, very early in the morning, the guests were told that several ladies had been seized with severe illness, and that the guests were to be removed to the hospital. I should have observed that a very elegant supper was laid in a room set apart for the purpose, to which ample justice was done. May we enjoy the repetition of many an anniversary as much as we enjoyed this our first one. The 20th of June was the actual day upon which we first set foot here in 1845, but it is not so conveniently commemorated the 27th.

Colonel Haultain is still suffering from severe illness, and proceeds to Auckland shortly.

The weather is most unfavourable. It commenced to blow a regular hurricane last evening, and continues up to the present time (4 p.m.) to blow as hard as ever. The Waipa has risen nine feet since yesterday, and is now a rushing torrent.

The "Bluenose," steamer, brought up a quantity of timber, which was offered for sale, at the rate of 10s. per 1,000 feet.

Major Hills arrived here this evening, per steamer "Kohoro," from Ngaruawahia, where he has been on a visit to Colonel Haultain.

COMPENSATION MEETING IN DRURY.
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
A MEETING was held in Drury on the 4th inst., for the purpose of preparing a memorial to the Honourable the House of Representatives in reference to the claims of settlers for compensation.

Mr. WILLIAM MORGAN, of Pukekohe, was called on to preside.

Mr. ALEX. McDONALD having read the draft of a memorial prepared by himself, and also one which had been drawn up by the chairman, the meeting then proceeded to the preparation of a memorial, which was ultimately agreed upon in the following terms:—

It was then moved by Mr. McDONALD, seconded by Mr. EASTON, "That the memorial agreed upon at the meeting for compensation, held at Drury this day, be at the SOUTHERN CROSS Office for signature until the 12th inst."

Mr. EASTON, jun., of Pukekohe, moved, and Mr. JAMES RUSSELL, of Drury, seconded the following, which was carried: "That the memorial be signed by Buckland, Esq., be entrusted with the presentation of this memorial, and that R. J. Creighton, Esq., the member for Parnell, be requested to co-operate with them in support of the prayer of same."

It was then moved by Mr. RUSSELL, and seconded, "That Mr. Creighton, Mr. Joshua Robinson, and Mr. James Russell be appointed as a deputation to call upon the members entrusted with the presentation of the memorial, and to solicit their strenuous advocacy of same."

The following is the form of the memorial agreed upon, a copy of which the Secretary was requested to send forthwith to the office of the DAILY SOUTHERN CROSS, in pursuance of the 1st resolution:—

"The memorial of the undersigned settlers of the province of Auckland
"Humbly sheweth,—That your memorialists are among the number of those in said province who have suffered enormous and serious losses in consequence of the native rebellion.

"That the respective claims of your memorialists have been heard, investigated, and adjudicated upon by Thomas Beckham, Esq., the Commissioner appointed for that purpose, since which time no further action has been taken in the matter;

"That your memorialists would draw the attention of your honourable House to the manner in which the claims of the settlers have been heard, and that your memorialists not only having been heard and investigated, but awarded in cash;

"That many of the settlers have put themselves in imminent danger, and have suffered much loss of property in aiding the Government to crush the rebellion. In the struggle some of their relatives have even been victims. Others have been rendered unable to station themselves, or otherwise rendered unfit for laborious occupation, while a large portion are not

felt convinced, had they consented to the appointment of the gentlemen named, the case would have been settled before this day.

Mr. J. S. MACFARLANE said he was out of town when the proposition alluded to by the last speaker had been made; but he would be glad to see all he could to point out the absurdity of allowing the estate to be thrown into Court. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Jones were the only two that he remembered who had held out against his advice. He had urged the point as fully as he could, but had had no idea at that time that such a delay would have been occasioned by Mr. Anderson being appointed official assignee. The case was another matter, which he could not understand, and that was how such a large estate, which at the outset apparently offered a moderate dividend, could have crumbled down until the sum of 2s. 6d. in the pound was announced as likely to be handed over.

Mr. ISAACS said the accountants' fees were set down at £200, and 13 per cent of the estate was taken off for Court fees. He did not know who it was that appointed Mr. Anderson as official assignee.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the Court had appointed Mr. Anderson as official assignee.

Mr. ISAACS said, in order to bring something tangible before the meeting, he thought a resolution should be adopted empowering a committee or deputation to take measures to have the true state of affairs placed before the Court, and that was how such a large estate, which at the outset apparently offered a moderate dividend, could have crumbled down until the sum of 2s. 6d. in the pound was announced as likely to be handed over.

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