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A. R. Dewitt Gives His Version of Collision With Thos. Rowan

Informed Coroner Wainwright That He Reduced and Then Shut Off Power of Motor Cycle Before Accident--Had been Travelling About Eight Miles Per Hour--Inquest to Continue.

DR. ATHERTON.

The inquest into the death of Thos. M. Rowan began last night before Coroner Wainwright and will be continued tonight. Twelve witnesses were examined last night. They were Robert MacDonald, Dr. W. J. Weaver, Dr. R. H. McGrath, Dr. A. B. Atherton, James P. Farrell, Frank G. Edwards, D. J. Stockford, Albert Dewitt, David Duffie, Fred Goodine, Charles Robinson and John Masson. Mr. Dewitt who rode the motor cycle which collided with the bicycle ridden by the late Mr. Rowan causing injuries which resulted in the death of Mr. Rowan, swore that just before the accident he had reduced the speed of his cycle to six miles an hour and that just before doing so the gauge on the motor had been fixed at about eight miles an hour and had been from the time he had left Barrett's cycle shop. The evidence of other witnesses was to the effect that the motor-cycle at the time of the accident was travelling at a greater speed than eight miles an hour. The evidence of the medical men was that death had been caused by inflammation of the brain due to fracture of the base of the skull. The evidence of those who witnessed the accident was that the deceased was riding his bicycle on the wrong side of the street and that the two bicycles collided when the two riders endeavored to take the proper side. Both men were thrown from their bicycles by the force of the collision. Mr. R. B. Hanson appeared on behalf of Mr. Dewitt. Mr. E. R. Macrum of St. John provincial manager for the Manufacturers' Life Insurance Company of which Mr. Dewitt is a representative was also present. The following evidence was given:

ROBT. MACDONALD.

Mr. Robt. MacDonald, sworn, stated that he had seen the victim of the accident put into a coach. He thought that he was the same man that he had shaved earlier in the afternoon. When he had shaved him Mr. Rowan seemed sober and in good health.

JAMES P. FARRELL.

Mr. James P. Farrell stated that he had gone to the scene of the accident. He had looked through the window of Hunt & MacDonald's drug store and recognized the man lying inside the door as Thomas M. Rowan. He had not seen the accident and knew nothing of the case. He had noticed the motor-cycle passing his place of business at a high rate of speed and remarked upon it. Within two minutes of seeing the motor-cycle he had heard of the accident.

DR. WEAVER.

Dr. W. J. Weaver, sworn, stated that at about 4 p. m. September 21st he had gone hurriedly to Hunt & MacDonald's drug store to attend the victim of an accident. He found the man lying on the floor in a semi-conscious condition. On examination witness found no fractures in the limbs. There was a severe hemorrhage from the left ear, bleeding from the nose, a bruise over the left eye and another on left cheek. Witness was told that man was Thomas Rowan and at once ordered him to be removed to his home. Dr. McGrath arrived at the same time and made an examination. Both regarded the accident as possibly very serious. Witness accompanied Mr. Rowan to his home and helped put him to bed. He then attended to the ear with antiseptic solutions and had ice applied to the head. He also prescribed medical treatment if required as a sedative. Witness attended him twice daily until Sunday evening and then met Dr. Atherton in consultation. From that time until death, both attended the case conjointly.

To Mr. Sampson—Death was a result of the injury.

To Mr. Hanson—The immediate cause of death was a fracture of the base of the skull and meningitis.

DR. McGRATH.

Dr. R. H. McGrath told of being called to attend Mr. Rowan at Hunt & MacDonald's drug store the day of the accident. He recognized Thomas Rowan, who seemed to be injured. Two men assisted the injured man to the rear shop. Together with Dr. Weaver, witness examined him and found him in a dazed and semi-conscious condition. He found no broken bones about the body but noted a severe hemorrhage from the left ear and both nostrils. There were bruises and scratches about the left eye and on the left cheek. Mr. Rowan was restless and blew his nose frequently, thus increasing the hemorrhage from the ear. Witness observed no scalp wound or evidence of fracture of the skull. The case was considered serious by witness and Dr. Weaver and it was decided to send the injured man home.

Dr. A. B. Atherton stated that Dr. Weaver had called him in in consultation on the case of Thomas Rowan on Sunday, September 25th. Patient when witness saw him, was suffering from pain in head and loin and was somewhat feverish. Witness was led to believe from symptoms that the patient was suffering from inflammation of the membranes of the brain, following upon the fracture of the base of the skull. Half a dozen leeches were put upon his head and the medical treatment continued. The inflammation was relieved for a time. On Tuesday night patient showed delirium, which recurred several times. On Wednesday witness fixed him about 15 or 16 ounces. Patient's condition grew more serious and stupor developed about forty-eight hours before death, which occurred on Saturday afternoon.

To Mr. Hanson — The immediate cause of death was the pressure on the brain by liquids produced by inflammation which was the result of fracture of the base of the skull which would be likely to follow a fall upon a hard pavement.

FRANK G. EDWARDS

Mr. Frank G. Edwards was next called. He said that from the Barker House office on the afternoon of the accident, he saw a man riding a bicycle up Queen Street behind a sloven wagon. He attempted to pass the sloven and a collision with a motor-cycle occurred. The man on the bicycle, Mr. Rowan passed the sloven on the right hand side. Mr. Rowan was thrown several feet and fell on the street. Witness thought Mr. Rowan struck his head on the curb. The injured man was picked up and carried into Hunt & MacDonald's drug store.

To Mr. Hanson—The man on the motor-cycle fell backwards from his machine. The motor-cycle was on the left-hand side of the road. There was room on his left-hand side for Mr. Rowan to pass the sloven.

D. J. STOCKFORD

Mr. D. J. Stockford said that he was standing in front of the post office on the afternoon of September 21st and saw a motor-cycle go down Queen Street and followed it with his eyes. Witness also noticed a sloven wagon coming up the street about in front of the Barker House. Witness also observed Mr. Rowan riding his bicycle near the curb next the Officers' Square. He noticed the motor-cycle on the same side of the street going down. As the motor-cycle reached the sloven a collision took place. It seemed to the witness as if both cyclists were trying to get their own side of the road, that is on the left side. Witness said to bystanders, "Good God, somebody is hurt." He went to the scene of the accident and found that the bicyclist had been carried into a drug store. The motor-cyclist was getting on his feet, having been knocked off his machine. The strap of a valise which the motor-cyclist had carried over his shoulder had been broken and the valise was lying on the pavement. Witness noticed a broken bottle which had contained oil, lying on the pavement. The motor-cyclist seemed dazed and badly shaken up. Five or ten minutes afterward he went round the corner. Witness talked to him afterward.

To Mr. Hanson—The motor-cycle stopped immediately after the accident and the two men fell in opposite directions.

Mr. Hanson suggested that Mr. Dewitt be heard in order that he might get away in the morning. He also asked the privilege of examining the witness. The coroner ruled that the witness would have to give his evidence in the usual way.

ALBERT R. DEWITT.

Mr. A. R. Dewitt stated that he was coming down Queen Street on his motor-cycle on the afternoon of September 21st. Near the Barker House he noticed a sloven coming up. The centre of the street was on the teamster's right. His own position was about half-way between the centre of the street and the curb. Witness noticed a man riding a bicycle up-street within two feet of the curb. At this time the wagon was nearest the witness. After noticing the team bicyclist had changed his position more to the centre of the street. Witness feared a collision and shut off the power. A collision followed, immediately after which the witness remembered nothing distinctly.

To Mr. Hanson—Witness said he was travelling about eight miles an hour by the gauge on his machine when he passed the Post Office, the same power with which he had left Barrett's Bicycle Shop. When passing the team witness reduced his speed about two miles an hour. Just

as he passed the team he shut the power off entirely. Both bicycles were turning to the left hand when they struck.

To Mr. Morris—Did not remember nearly colliding with a man near the corner of Regent and Queen Streets at about 12.30 on the afternoon of September 21st.

To Mr. Sampson—The sloven did not obscure witness's view of the bicyclist.

DAVID DUFFIE

Mr. David Duffie was the next witness. He said he was standing near C. A. Burchill's drug store and heard the two machines strike. He went to the scene of the accident but two men got there first and picked Mr. Rowan up. Witness picked up Mr. Dewitt and also picked up the motor-cycle. Mr. Stockford came at about that time and said the man was hurt more than he knew.

To Mr. Hanson—Mr. Rowan had been quite close to the right-hand curb going up. Witness had noticed one of R. T. Baird's double-wagons going up street with a lame man named Hill driving.

FRED GOODINE

Mr. Fred Goodine stated that at the time of the accident he was sitting on his stand. He observed the two cyclists coming in opposite directions. A horse and wagon standing in front of Whelpley's shop obscured view of witness at the time of the collision. When witness heard the machines strike he went over and saw both men lying on the pavement. Mr. Rowan was close to the curb next the Officers' Square. Mr. Dewitt was lying on his side with one leg under the motor cycle. Mr. Rowan was carried into a drug store. Mr. Dewitt's hands were bleeding and bruised. The front rim of the motor-cycle was bent.

CHARLES ROBINSON

Mr. Charles Robinson was next called. He said he had observed the accident from Whelpley's shop. A horse and wagon was standing right in front of the door about three feet from the curb. A double-wagon was going up in the middle of the street. A motor-cyclist was coming down the street. Witness heard a crash and saw the driver of the double-wagon turn around. Witness ran out and saw Mr. Rowan lying on the pavement and the other man getting out from beneath the motor-cycle.

JOHN MASSON

Mr. John Masson was next heard. He said that on September 21st Mr. Thomas Rowan came into Robert MacDonald's barber shop for a shave. Witness was alone but went out and got the barber. Witness left the shop shortly before Mr. Rowan did and went up street. When in front of the Golden Fleece store Witness observed Mr. Rowan coming up street on his bicycle slowly about three feet from the curb. Witness saw the motor-cyclist coming down street and had a plain view of the accident. As far as witness observed the motor-cyclist had not slackened speed from as far up as Jas. P. Farrell's store. The motor-cycle struck Mr. Rowan's wheel on the left side and Mr. Dewitt's head struck Mr. Rowan's left cheek. The contact knocked Mr. Rowan three feet over his bicycle. Dewitt fell sideways off his bicycle. Witness ran over to Mr. Rowan and shouted to Wm. McGorman to help carry the man to the drug store. The two carried the man to Hunt & MacDonald's drug store. Witness helped make the injured man comfortable when Dr. Weaver arrived. A few minutes afterward Mr. Rowan became conscious and tried to get up. He was taken into the back shop. Witness picked up Mr. Rowan's bicycle. It was badly damaged, the cross-bar and handle-bars were bent and the wheels broken.

The inquest closed at 10.30 adjourning until 7.30 p. m. Tuesday

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