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Amir

Orehunga

Inquest proceedings on a McVickers -
Rider as to quercus eating chlorodynia &c.

[ab]

Cor. No. 6.-237]

COLONY OF
NEW ZEALAND,
TO WIT.

INFORMATIONS of WITNESSES severally taken and acknow-
ledged on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, touching the

Provincial
District of Orehunga

death of Archibald McVickers
at the dwellinghouse of Robert Tennahau
known by the name of The Hibernian Hotel, Orehunga,
in the Provincial District of Auckland in the colony

above-mentioned, on Thursday the sixteenth day of
February one thousand eight hundred and ~~seventy~~ eighty two
before Thomas Moore Wilson, Doctor of Medicine

Referred to the
Under Secretary
R. S. Johnston
24/2/82

one of the Coroners for the said colony, on an Inquisition then and
there taken on view of the body of the above named Infant

Copy of Rider made

then and there lying dead, as follows, to wit:—

82/959
Hugh Valley
m.s.

28.2.82

Marriet Woodward McVickers being sworn, saith that I saw
wife of Archibald McVickers who is a Butcher
by occupation, and reside at Orehunga.
(Deceased was my son his age was 17)
seventeen days. He was born prematurely, about
8 months; and was delicate from his birth.
He was brought up at his breast, which he
took very well. He was quite well up to
Monday last 13th inst. when he seemed
to be taken with pain in his stomach.
He screamed very much. The time was
about.

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about 10 o'clock am. I had some chlorodyne
 in the house, which my nurse, by name
 Mrs. Wells, had used for me after my
 confinement. I counted 3 three drops into
 a tallowsonful of water, and attempted to give
 it to Deceased. I believe that only about
 half of the quantity was taken, owing to
 my hand shaking and being unsteady.
 My own advised me to give the medicine to De-
 ceased I did it altogether of my own
 will, thinking that it would ease the
 child's pain and not being aware of the
 dangerous nature of the drug. I never
 had given any of it to the child previously.
 Deceased was my first child and I have
 had no experience of the management of
 children. There was no one with me in the
 house when I gave the medicine to Deceased.
 Soon after I had given the chlorodyne to the in-
 fant it ceased crying. My Mother came in
 at this time and washed the child. He cried
 a little when it was washed but not much.
 He seemed all right then. My Mother then
 marked something peculiar about the child
 and asked me what I had given it. I
 told her what I had done and she said I
 should not have done it. My Mother then
 dressed the baby and handed it to me. I gave
 it the breast but it would not take it.
 It was very sleepy, more so than I had
 ever seen it before. I then laid it down,
 and called my Mother and observed to her
 that I thought it had something the matter
 with it. I now sent for Mrs. Hemming,
 who lives next door. She came and
 after looking at the baby said she did not
 think

Wm

think there was anything the matter with it.
 but to make sure she advised me to take it
 to Dr. Scott - I did so at 11 o'clock
 The doctor was not in so I gave the child
 to Mr. Gillman's the servant. He looked at it
 and said the child was medicated. I don't
 know what medicine it was. I omitted to
 mention that I told Mr. Gillman at the first
 what I had given to the child. About 1:30
 P.M. Dr. Scott came to Mr. Gillman's shop;
 and examined the child. The doctor did not
 tell me what he thought about it, but
 at once put it into a warm bath. He
 then slapped the chest with a handkerchief,
 dipped in cold water. - This had no effect,
 and did not rouse the child or make it
 cry. I took the child home about 3 P.M.
 It was still sleeping and breathing heavily.
 It did not get vomit. - About 10:45 P.M.
 it died. I told my husband about the
 matter when I went to Dr. Scott's.
 The Pharmacopoeia was brought to me by Mr. Wells on
 the day after I was confined. She said she
 bought it from Mr. Moody the grocer.
 The bottle is a halpenny one and contains now
 about 3/4 of the drachm. Before giving the
 medicine to the child, I did not read
 the directions on the label. I am certain
 that I did not give more than the three
 drops. Dr. Scott saw the child once in the course
 of the evening after it was taken home

Harriet Mrs. me wicker

William

William George Scott, being sworn says
 I am a duly qualified and registered sur-
 geon practicing in Ouelungo. I have known
 the last witness for the last 12 months.
 I did not attend her in her confinement;
 I have seen the evidence given by her
 and first saw the infant at the time and
 place stated by her. I did not interrogate
 her but received the statement made by
 Mr Gillman in her presence, that the
 child had 4 four drops of Chlorodyne ad-
 ministered to it by the mother 9 am.
 The mother did not correct Mr Gillman
 statement in any way. The child was
 completely comatose that is in a pro-
 found sleep, breathing heavily and ir-
 regularly - occasionally appearing to cease
 breathing at all for 5 minutes at a time.
 The pupils were not contracted, but
 appeared to be of natural size. There was
 entire loss of feeling, even on the eye being
 touched. The legs were rigid and the
 feet were corpalite. The pulse was imper-
 ceptible at the wrist. At the heart it was
 feeble and slow. - My impression was
 that the child was suffering from narcotic
 poisoning. Such as would be likely to be
 sent from an overdose of an Opiate such
 as Chlorodyne which contains Mezate of
 Morphine, Chloroform, Potash and Indian Hemp.
 All medicines containing Opium are very dangerous
 to young children, and ought ^{not} to be given to a child
 of the age of the said under any circumstances.
 I tried to administer Strong Coffee but
 the child could not swallow enough to do
 any good. I did not try an Emetic.

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I used the Magnet battery to the Head & spine and over the region of the heart, but without apparent benefit. The child could not be raised by any means. The warm baths and cold affusions were equally useless. I tickled the throat with a feather, but that did not induce vomiting. Dr. Harcourt consulted and advised with me in the case. I visited the child subsequently, at its home, but it was evidently dying. It died about 10.45 ^{PM} about 12 hours after the Chloroform was given. I believe the cause of death was Narcotic poisoning from some preparation of Opium. I believe the Mother to be a steady, sober person, but inexperienced about children. I believe it is a common practice for parents and nurses to administer Chloroform to very young children, and it cannot be too strongly condemned. I do not think that a post-mortem examination is required the exhumation being done. The Mother did not tell me that the child was subject to convulsions, or any other complaint. It was brought to me wholly and solely on account of the effects of something administered. The child was not a particularly weakly child, but was fairly robust.

W. J. Scott
M.R.C.S. etc.

All the above informations were carefully taken and acknowledged on the day, and year and at the place first above mentioned before me
Thomas Moore, Prisoner
Coroner.

COLONY OF
NEW ZEALAND,
TO WIT.

AN INQUISITION indented, taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, at the house of Robert Jeremiah (Republican)
known by the name of the "Hibernian Hotel", and situated at Onehunga in the provincial
at district of Auckland in the said colony, on the sixteenth day of February
in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty two, before Thomas Moore Wilson Doctor of Medicine
one of the Coroners of our Sovereign Lady the Queen for the said colony, on view of the body of Archibald M. Vickers -

Provincial District
Auckland.

, then and there lying dead, upon the oath of Thomas George Blakely Foreman
Henry Ansell - William Perrin - Robert Watt - Joseph Birckett - Martin Walsh -
James Robb - John Oates - Anderson Christie - James Pegler - James Turner -
William Mooney - and William Roche - Jurors -

good and lawful men of the neighbourhood, duly chosen, and who being there and then duly sworn and charged to inquire for our Lady the Queen,
when, how, and by what means the said Archibald M. Vickers came to his death, do upon their

oaths say - That Harriet Woodward M. Vickers being totally ignorant of the science of Medicine on the thirteenth day
of February in the year aforesaid, at Onehunga in the provincial district and colony aforesaid, into Archibald M. Vickers
her own infant son then and there suffering from colic did then and there give and administer an overdose of a certain dangerous
medicines called Chlorodyne for the relief of the said illness by means whereof the said Archibald M. Vickers then and there became
sick and distempred in body; of which said sickness so caused by the said poisonous medicine so administered, and
swallowed down the said Archibald M. Vickers on the said thirteenth day of February in the year aforesaid and at
the place aforesaid did die.

And so the Jurors aforesaid upon their oath aforesaid do say that the said
Harriet Woodward M. Vickers killed the said Archibald M. Vickers in manner and by the means
aforesaid did kill, and slay, but not feloniously, or of her malice aforethought, but by misadventure
only.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, as well the said Coroner as the said Jurors aforesaid have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals the day and
year first above written

Thomas Moore Wilson Coroner.

Verdict
The Jury strongly condemn
the sale of such poisons, as
Chlorodyne by Grocers and
others who are not bound
by the provisions of the
"Poisons Act."
W. Wilson
Coroner

FORMAN,
Thomas George Blakely Foreman
William Perrin
Joseph Birckett
James Robb
Anderson Christie
James Turner
William Roche
Henry Ansell
Robert Watt
Martin Walsh
John Oates
James Pegler
Wm Mooney