

Verdict On Death of Maurice Downing

Unfortunate Man Died of Suffocation from Drowning — Recommend Pulmotor be Kept at Ambulance Station and Doctor be in Attendance at Hospital at All Times.

The following verdict was brought last night by the coroner's jury, empaneled by Coroner Dr. William Warwick, called to inquire into the death of Maurice Downing, the victim of the fatal accident in the Market Slip on the evening of Wednesday, the 19th of May:

"We, the jury empaneled to inquire into the death of Maurice Downing, do find that the deceased, while in an intoxicated condition, fell over the North Wharf, and his death in the General Public Hospital was caused by suffocation from drowning on May 19th, 1920.

"And we do recommend that the officers of the St. John Police Department shall receive first aid instruction.

"We further recommend that the pulmotor be kept in the same fire station as the ambulance, and those in charge be fully instructed in the use of it. And, further, that a doctor at all times be in attendance at the General Public Hospital.

(Signed) "J. Charlton Berrie, foreman; Roy F. Potts, Daniel Jackson, Howard W. Phinney, William Craft, George H. McLaughlin, Ernest J. Todd."

Cecilia M. Gleason, night supervisor at the General Public Hospital, the first witness called, stated that she had admitted Maurice Downing to the hospital about 9.10 on the night of May 19th. The patient was discolored, had no pulse, and respiration could only be detected in faint gasps. A hypodermic injection was given and artificial respiration produced for the space of ten minutes. The patient was cold as death, but an emergency stimulant of C. C. camphor in oil was given him. Dr. Campbell was called on the telephone, as there was no doctor in the hospital at the time. The witness described to the doctor the condition of the patient and what had been done. The doctor said nothing further could be done but to keep up the camphor and oil. When the witness returned to the ward, the man was apparently dead, but was given another C. C. of camphor. The patient did not respond to either the artificial respiration or stimulants, given in the hospital. The patient gave a few little gasps from the lower part of the chest, about three, when first admitted.

In answer to a juror, who asked if the witness would be capable of taking a doctor's place, the Coroner replied that she was a registered nurse, had trained three years and practiced her profession three and a half years. The witness stated that there was but one house doctor at the hospital. He was out at the time, but witness had his telephone number.

In reply to questions, witness said "C. C." was the last stimulant used in an emergency case. She did not notice any bruises on the patient; his clothing was wet and full of mud.

Dr. H. L. Abramson, pathologist for the Department of Health, stated that he had performed an autopsy on the body of Maurice Downing. The body was considerably discolored. There was a small abrasion over the left eye. The stomach had a strong odor of whiskey. The body was that of an athletic man, firm and well developed. The cause of death, suffocation by drowning. The alcohol might have occurred after death. There was no sign of fracture. He could not state from the condition of the lungs whether anything further could have been done. All the organs were in a healthy condition. First aid rendered on the wharf would have had a marked beneficial effect than if rendered in the hospital. Witness replied to the Coroner that he considered a pulmotor preferable to first aid methods in inducing artificial respiration.

John T. Power, sergeant detective, did not recall ever seeing Maurice Downing until he helped take him out of the Market Slip. Witness went there in the police patrol, accompanied by Detectives Biddiscombe and Donahue in consequence of a messenger reporting. On arrival he saw Michael Cogswell on the North Wharf with a rope in his hand, trying to assist someone below. Cogswell was holding the rope in one hand, and witness pushed him out of the way. Biddiscombe jumped down on the scow, and witness ran around to the wharf with Donahue and helped carry Downing ashore. The tide was halfway in.

Downing was placed on a barrel on the South Wharf for a while and then on the ground. The three detectives worked over him for five minutes, rendering first aid as well as they knew how. The ambulance arrived, and Downing was sent to the hospital, as witness thought that was the best place for him.

Witness had never had any instructions in first aid, nor practical experience with drowning cases.

Downing's face was discolored, perhaps from mud. He groaned once or twice when taken from the water. Witness could not say that he breathed. After Downing was taken to the hospital, witness took Mariner to the police station; he was also in a serious condition.

Witness had heard there was a pulmotor in the city, but had never seen it. He heard it was kept in No. 2 Engine House, and could be obtained by phoning the Engine House or the police station. Both men taken to the police station were under the influence of liquor. When seen by witness, Cogswell was not in a fit state to render assistance. The distance from the top of the wharf to the water was from twelve to fifteen feet.

Police officer Harry B. Young said that he was on duty and on Water Street on the evening of May 19th when he heard shouts from North Wharf, on running over he saw a man standing on the wharf, who cried to run quick, two men were overboard. The man was in a drunken condition. Witness got a ladder from a boat and went down on a scow. The man on the wharf had a rope and witness called to him to throw it down, but he offered no assistance. The detectives then arrived and threw down the rope and witness lowered himself

into the water. He found two men, Mariner was holding the face of Downing, who was unconscious, out of the water. Witness took Downing from him and carried him ashore. Hearing a shout for help, he returned to Mariner who had collapsed by the meantime, and brought him ashore and put him in the patrol wagon. Witness then helped render assistance to Downing.

It was about ten minutes after hearing the shouting when Downing was brought ashore. The scow was aground, the water about five feet deep. Downing was unconscious when taken ashore, but groaned twice. He was also black in the face. Witness had been on the force over three years. He knew nothing of first aid. On arriving on the wharf he had only seen one man. The scow was so close to the edge of the wharf that witness was obliged to come from its side edge ways. Witness knew nothing of a pulmotor and did not know there was one in the city. Something had been said of giving the force first aid instructions but nothing had ever been

Patrick Francis Biddiscombe, city detective testified that on the evening of May 19th in consequence of a telephone message he had gone to the North Wharf in the police patrol with Sergeant Detective Powers and Detective Donahue. There were three or four men on the wharf at the time one in an intoxicated condition. The witness ran to the edge of the wharf and saw policeman Young in the water. Witness got some men to hold a rope and jumped down on a scow to assist officer Young. Young took him ashore, the third man started to follow so witness got up and ran round to the scow. Downing was pulled over his shoulders and carried to the wharf, the third man started to follow so witness got up and ran round to the scow. Downing was pulled over his shoulders and carried to the wharf, the third man started to follow so witness got up and ran round to the scow.

Witness looked for a rope and called for help, but was in a useless condition to give help. One fellow came, but seemed afraid of the witness and ran back up the wharf. Witness would not leave his companions and they were arrested by the detectives. All three were on friendly terms and there had been no fighting.

Cogswell was the last witness called. He took them down on the wharf and gave them a drink of the extract he had. He remembered they sat on the cap of the wharf. They sat there a long while and witness gave Edward Corbett \$10 to go to get a bottle, but he never came back and the three started out to look for him. They walked up the wharf, side by side. Witness was in the middle, and suddenly missed his companions. He heard a splash and on looking over the wharf saw the two in the water. Witness looked for a rope and called for help, but was in a useless condition to give help. One fellow came, but seemed afraid of the witness and ran back up the wharf. Witness would not leave his companions and they were arrested by the detectives. All three were on friendly terms and there had been no fighting.

The ambulance driver suggested going after the pulmotor and witness said he had better go. Miss Gleason, the nurse, said that it was not artificial respiration that was needed, there was something wrong with the heart. The orderly continued to work on the man as the detectives had done, until the nurses gave an injection. He was then taken upstairs. Miss Gleason said he would be all right, but came down in a few minutes and told witness he had better get a priest.

Telephone information called a priest, and Sergeant Powers called Downing's brother. They both arrived in about ten or fifteen minutes, but they had no authority pronounced Downing dead.

Witness said that when Downing was first brought on the wharf, breathing was not noticeable but when the hospital was reached he was in better condition than at any other time. The witness was sure he was breathing even when artificial respiration was not being given. The witness had never had any training in first aid. The time the hurry call was sent in was 9.15. An order was issued some two months previous to the accident asking all men on the force desiring to take a first aid course to sign their names to the order. The majority on the force did so, but no action ensued. Witness knew there was a pulmotor in the city at No. 2 engine house in charge of the salvage police, the ambulance was kept in No. 2 engine house. It was customary in drowning accidents to ring the fire alarm and call out the salvage corps.

Patrick Mariner stated that he met Downing on Main Street at between one and two p.m. that afternoon. Downing said he had been drunk all the day before and was not feeling well. Witness lent him \$2.00 with which he got a square face of gin. They treated some longshoremen on Long Wharf and finished the bottle themselves. On Brunsell Street at about five o'clock, Downing got another square face and treated witness. They had a clam chowder, and then went down to the North Wharf. Both men knew what they were doing. They finished the square face there. About fifteen minutes later Cogswell came along and the three finished a bottle of lemon extract. Cogswell had there was another man with Cogswell and Cogswell gave him \$10. to get some liquor. The man said he would be

back in ten minutes. Witness went up town to get some cigarettes and returned to the wharf. Witness, Downing and Cogswell sat and talked for a while and Downing suggested going up Bay Street to meet the man with the bottle. The three had taken two or three steps when Downing suddenly turned and took hold of witness. Witness cried "My God, what is the matter," and jumped after Downing who fell off the wharf. The witness landed on his feet between the vessel and the wharf. It was pitch dark, he got his arm under the chin of Downing and held his head out of the water, at the same time calling loudly for help. None came so he latched his feet against the wharf and after a time was unable to move. A rope was lowered but witness was too exhausted to take it, as he would have to let go Downing. The water was then about up to the mouth of witness. The officer took Downing from him and witness collapsed.

Downing fell over the wharf about half an hour after the lemon extract had been taken. Neither Downing nor witness stirred when they started up the wharf. They were about ten or fifteen feet before the accident occurred. Michael Cogswell said he remembered little of May 19th, as he was pretty drunk all that day. He met Downing and Mariner at the laborer's cell, took them down on the wharf and gave them a drink of the extract he had. He remembered they sat on the cap of the wharf. They sat there a long while and witness gave Edward Corbett \$10 to go to get a bottle, but he never came back and the three started out to look for him. They walked up the wharf, side by side. Witness was in the middle, and suddenly missed his companions. He heard a splash and on looking over the wharf saw the two in the water. Witness looked for a rope and called for help, but was in a useless condition to give help. One fellow came, but seemed afraid of the witness and ran back up the wharf. Witness would not leave his companions and they were arrested by the detectives. All three were on friendly terms and there had been no fighting.

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St. George

St. George, N. B., May 26.—Mr. Thomas W. Dunbar spent Sunday at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Dunbar, Pennfield. On Monday he boarded the train for San Jose, California, where he intends to locate. His family will follow the latter part of the summer.

At the Manse, St. George, on Tuesday evening, 18th instant, Arthur F. Barry and Helena A. McDougall were united in marriage by Rev. John C. Mortimer. Mrs. Ernest McDougall, sister of the bride, was bridesmaid, and Mr. McDougall acted as best man. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Moore, of St. Stephen, is visiting her daughter, Mrs. George F. Meating.

Mrs. Laura Goss has returned home after several weeks spent in St. John.

Mrs. Katherine Gillmor and her grandson, Arthur Phelan, arrived from Montreal last week and will spend the summer months at "Bon Lauroc."

Miss Blanche McVivier, of St. John, was the weekend guest of her mother, Mrs. Fred McVivier.

Miss Ray Cawley, accompanied by Miss Maude Blackstone of St. John, were recent guests of Mrs. A. H. Cawley.

Mrs. Charles Maxwell returned to West Concord, N. H., on Friday, after a few days spent with relatives here.

Mr. Percé Tayte, of St. John West, spent the holiday at home.

Mr. Fred Wentworth, of St. John, was a recent guest of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Westworth, Letete.

Mrs. Geo. A. Gress, who has been the guest of Mrs. J. Henry Sherrard, returned to West St. John last week.

Mr. Charles Lee, of the Bank of Nova Scotia, St. John, was the holiday guest of Mr. James Brydon.

Miss Roberta Womster, of Pennfield is visiting friends in town.

Miss Bessie McLeod, of St. John, spent the 24th with her sister, Mrs. James S. McKay.

Mr. Frank Bullock, of St. John, was the guest this week of his grand parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bullock.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Allen announce the birth of a son, May 23rd.

Miss Thomas Elliott, of St. John, was the guest this week of Rev. J. W. Holland.

Victoria Day was observed in the usual manner. In the afternoon a game of baseball was held between the Wolves of St. John and the local team, the result being a victory for the home team, score 4-8. The day closed with a dance in the Masonic Temple, music furnished by Watts' orchestra.

During the past week Dr. H. I. Taylor has been collecting for the Salvation Army Jubilee fund and has met with great success.

Mr. Robert Gray, one of our oldest citizens, died at the home of his son, James, on Friday evening, at the age of 80 years. He was a member of the St. Mark's Church, on Sunday afternoon, Rev. Mr. Lewis of Trinity Church, St. John, conducting services within six months.

The report of Col. Edward W. Ryan, Red Cross commissioner for North Russia, indicates that Soviet leaders are confronted by such a failure of their economic and social experiment as well in all probability bring about the downfall of the Lenin regime within six months.

Mr. B. Bunnell has returned home after a few weeks spent with relatives in Lawrence, Mass.

Mr. George E. Frauley was a visitor to the city this week.

Miss Kathryn Lynott visited relatives in Calais, Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. Carlos Chienet, of Parrisboro, N. B., was in town on Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. Watson R. Dow left for St. Stephen on Monday, where he will be employed in W. B. Sampson's garage.

Mr. Thomas Elliott, of St. John, was the guest this week of Rev. J. W. Holland.

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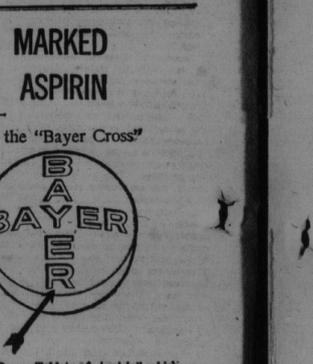
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Proves and Persuads

Verdict On Death of Maurice Downing

Unfortunate Man Died of Suffocation from Drowning — Recommend Pulmotor be Kept at Ambulance Station and Doctor be in Attendance at Hospital at All Times.

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"We, the jury empaneled to inquire into the death of Maurice Downing, do find that the deceased, while in an intoxicated condition, fell over the North Wharf, and his death in the General Public Hospital was caused by suffocation from drowning on May 19th, 1920.

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"We further recommend that the pulmotor be kept in the same fire station as the ambulance, and those in charge be fully instructed in the use of it. And, further, that a doctor at all times be in attendance at the General Public Hospital.

(Signed) "J. Charlton Berrie, foreman