

## **1914 EXPLOSION & FIRE - BENGE & PRATT STORE UPPER HUTT**

Saturday 28th March 1914 - Fire discovered about 11.40 p.m.

Sunday 29 March 1914 - Explosion occurs about 12.08 a.m.

Benge & Pratt Store Main road Upper Hutt	pages 1 to 4
Men killed by the explosion	pages 5 to 21
Injured while assisting with the fire and explosion	pages 22 to 24
People who assisted with the disaster & enquiry	pages 25 to 33
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### **BENGE & PRATT STORE MAIN ROAD UPPER HUTT**

(pages 1 to 4)

#### Business partners

A- Herbert Victor BENGE

B- Herbert Leopold PRATT

#### Staff

1. Leonard CLOUGH chief baker
2. Albert Francis COOPER grocery boy
3. Francis Ernest FIELD Carter
4. Miss HUDDEN ledger keeper
5. Miss Catherine MICHELL drapery department
6. John Robert PATON carter
7. John Wesley VIVIAN Grocery department (died from the explosion)
8. Henry Maltwood WILLIAMS second Baker

#### Buildings damaged and Insurance cover

- Benge and Pratt Store building was owned by Mr W J WILKIE Upper Hutt and insured with the Commercial Union Office. Benge and Pratt stock was insured with the Guardian Office
- Mr HAZELWOOD drapery Store was totally destroyed and was owned by Messrs Hazelwood and Co and was insured with Alliance.
- The Provincial Hotel owned by Messrs Staples and Co was damaged and insured with Atlas Office. The hotel stock and furniture was owned by the licensee Mr CRABTREE and insured with Liverpool London and Globe Office

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A- Herbert Victor BENGE born 1878 New Zealand died 1967 New Zealand (Partner at Benge & Pratt Store) married 1903 New Zealand Elizabeth MCCROSSIN

#Herbert Victor BENGE born 1878 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1878 folio website 1878/7595 parents Rose Annie and John Benge

#Herbert Victor BENGE married 1903 New Zealand Elizabeth MCCROSSIN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1903 folio website 1903/3686

#Herbert Victor BENGE grocer Russell Street Upper Hutt (484) & Elizabeth BENGE married Russell Street Upper Hutt (474) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#Herbert Victor BENGE died 1967 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1967 folio website 1967/36024 age 89 born about 1878

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B- Herbert Leopold PRATT born about 1876 died 1959 New Zealand (Partner of Benge & Pratt Store) married 1909 New Zealand Irene Maud Waimate SCOTT born about 1870 died 1947 New Zealand

#Herbert Leopold PRATT married 1909 New Zealand Irene Maud Waimate SCOTT reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1909 folio website 1909/5224

#Herbert Leopold PRATT grocer Upper Hutt (5067) & Irene Maud Waimate PRATT married Station Road Upper Hutt (5068) [1914 Hutt Electoral Roll](#) Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Irene Maud PRATT died 1947 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1947 folio website 1947/23581 age 77 born about 1870  
#Herbert Leopold PRATT died 1959 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1959 folio website 1959/29584 age 83 born about 1876

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1- [Leonard CLOUGH](#) born 1876 New Zealand died 1935 New Zealand (chief baker at Bengie & Pratt Store) married 1899 New Zealand Annie Maud HOOPER born about 1877 died 1935 New Zealand  
#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, [Mr Clough baker](#), Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7  
#Leonard CLOUGH born 1876 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1876 folio website 1876/6645 parents Elizabeth and Thomas Edward Clough  
#Leonard CLOUGH married 1899 New Zealand Annie Maud HOOPER reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1899 folio website 1899/4826  
#Leonard CLOUGH baker Williams Street Upper Hutt (1229) & Annie CLOUGH married Williams Street Upper Hutt (50681226) [1914 Hutt Electoral Roll](#) Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Leonard CLOUGH died 1935 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1935 folio website 1935/16377 age 58 born about 1877  
#Annie Maude CLOUGH died 1935 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1935 folio website 1935/16387 age 58 born about 1877

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2- [Albert Francis COOPER](#) (15 year old grocery boy who gave evidence about explosives held in store) born 16 July 1899 New Zealand died 1978 New Zealand married 1920 New Zealand Lily Alice FULLER born 01 April 1899 died 1987 New Zealand  
#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the [boy Cooper](#) reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7  
#Albert Francis COOPER born 1899 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1899 folio website 1899/7088 parents Augusta Hulda and Thomas William Cooper  
#Albert Francis COOPER slaughter man Trentham Military Camp (1771) 1919 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Albert Francis COOPER married 1920 New Zealand Lily Alice FULLER reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1920 folio website 1920/5988  
#Albert Francis COOPER mill hand Akatarawa (2430) & Lily Alice COOPER married Akatarawa (2443) 1946 Otaki Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Albert Francis COOPER died 1978 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1978 folio website 1978/45145 age 58 born 16 July 1899  
#Lily Alice COOPER died 1987 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1987 folio website 1987/49166 born 01 April 1899

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3- [Francis Ernest FIELD](#) born about 1879 died 1945 Upper Hutt New Zealand (Carter employed by Bengie & Pratt) married Frances Surname unknown born 1878 died 1966  
#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, [Mr Field as carter](#), Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the

drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

#Frances Ernest FIELD carter Trentham (2618) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#Francis Ernest FIELD died 1945 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1945 folio website 1945/27143 age 66 born about 1879

#Frances FIELD died 1966 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1966 folio website 1966/39727 age 88 born about 1878

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4- Miss HUDDEN or HADDEN or HADDON (ledger keeper employed by Benge and Pratt Store)

#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

NOT SURE #Marion HADDON spinster Railway Hotel (2269) 1914 Wellington North Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls perhaps related to Alfred and/or David and/or James Bellamy and/or William Henry Haddon of Wellington North

NOT SURE #Mary HADDON spinster 33 Mulgrave Street (12743) 1928 Wellington North Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls perhaps related to Alfred and/or David Haddon of Wellington North

NOT SURE #Mary HADDEN spinster Mental Hospital Porirua (2744) 1928 Otaki Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls perhaps her parents were Susan Eliza and Charles William of Silverstream

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5- Miss MICHELL (drapery department employed by Benge and Pratt Store)

#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

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6- John Robert PATON born 1884 New Zealand died 1944 New Zealand (carter employed at Benge & Pratt Store) married 1905 New Zealand Agnes RAINEY born 1884 New Zealand died 1949 New Zealand

#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

#John Robert PATON born 1884 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1884 folio website 1884/12741 parents Elizabeth and James Paton

#Agnes RAINEY born 1884 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1884 folio website 1884/15365 parents Eliza and Hugh Rainey

#John Robert PATON married 1905 New Zealand Agnes RAINEY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1905 folio 4685

#John Robert PATON grocer Main Road Upper Hutt (4832) & Agnes PATON married Main Road Upper Hutt (4830) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#John Robert PATON died 1944 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1944 folio website 1944/25466 age 60 born about 1884

#Agnes PATON died 1949 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1949 folio website 1949/30644 age 65 born about 1884

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7- John Wesley VIVIAN Grocery department (died from the explosion)

#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

#Refer to section titled "Men killed by Explosion" page 20 for John Wesley Vivian's details

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8- Henry Maltwood WILLIAMS (second Baker at Bengie & Pratt Store) born 1879 died 1947 Gisborne New Zealand married Edith Surname Unknown born 1881 died December 1969 Gisborne New Zealand

#The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper reference National Library of NZ Papers past website National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post website 20 April 1914 page 7

#Henry Maltwood WILLIAMS baker Williams Mungaroa Road Trentham (7679) (1911 Hutt Electoral Roll) Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#Henry Maltwood WILLIAMS died November 1947 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1947 folio website 1947/30294 age 68 born about 1879

#Sacred and loving memory of Henry M Williams 1879-1947 a devoted husband and father and his loving wife Edith 1881-1969 Peace perfect peace reference Gisborne City Council website Taruheru cemetery database

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## MEN KILLED BY THE EXPLOSION

(pages 5 to 21)

1. James COMESKY cause of death was concussion and shock age 57 years Postmaster Upper Hutt left widow
  2. William Daniel FLYNN cause of death by explosion and not by fire age 35 years Railway guard left widow
  3. Denis MAHONEY cause of death by explosion age 38 years Constable Upper Hutt Police Station left widow
  4. Virgil Francis MCGOVERN cause of death by explosion or by the fire or both age 26 years member of the Upper Hutt Town Board
  5. Evard Edward Henry PELLING cause of death unknown but died from cerebral injuries age 18 years Blacksmith's assistant
  6. George William TAYLOR cause of death injuries received by the explosion age 19 years Railway porter Upper Hutt
  7. Michael John TOOHEY cause of death due being thrown violently on the ground and the actual cause of death was internal haemorrhage of the brain age 29 years Bridge contractor
  8. John Wesley VIVIAN cause of death was from fracture of the base of the skull shown by haemorrhage from the ears age 32 years Storeman at Bengel and Pratt's store
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- 1- James COMESKEY** born 1856 Newcastle upon Tyne Northumberland England died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand married 1881 Newcastle upon Tyne Northumberland England Sarah Jane BATTY born about 1860 died 29 August 1936 Auckland New Zealand  
#James COMESKEY born 1856 Newcastle upon Tyne England reference Ancestry website RGO UK birth registration 1856 September quarter district Newcastle upon Tyne county Northumberland volume 10b page 80  
#James COMESKEY married 1881 Newcastle upon Tyne Northumberland England Mary Jane BATTY reference Ancestry website RGO UK Marriage registration 1881 September quarter district Newcastle upon Tyne County Northumberland volume 10b page 220  
#James COMESKEY occupation Registrar BDM place Hokianga reference 1891 NZ Gazette page 1378 appointments  
#1893 City of Auckland Electoral Roll James COMESKEY Telegraphist Sumner Street residential (2537) & Sarah Jane COMESKEY home duties Sumner Street residential (2538) reference NZSG CD of combined New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#1896 Auckland Electoral Roll James COMESKEY telegraphist Sumner Street residential (2914) & Sarah Jane COMESKEY home duties Sumner Street residential (2915) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#1905-1906 Bay of Islands Electoral Roll Northland James COMESKEY postmaster Ohaeawai (762) & Sarah Jane COMESKEY married Ohaeawai (763) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#1911 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington James COMESKEY postmaster Upper Hutt (1577) & Sarah Jane married Upper Hutt (1579) & Patrick Bernard COMESKEY blacksmith Upper Hutt (1578) & Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY spinster Upper Hutt (1580) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#James COMESKEY [sic] died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3215 age 57 born about 1857  
#James COMESKEY died and was buried 31 March 1914 St Joseph's churchyard Upper Hutt  
#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis & Comesky [sic] James & Flynn William & Taylor George William & Vivian John Wesley reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 476 record number COR 1914/515 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719955  
#James COMESKEY 1914 Probate files 1914 Wellington High Court filed date 21 August 1914 Intestate (letters of administration) reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 accession W3265 box 268 record 16733 item ID R22220106  
#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John

Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#Mr James Comesky was 55 years of age and joined the Post and Telegraph Department as a telegraphist in Auckland two days before Christmas 1881. Prior to that date he served twelve years in the Postal Service of the United Kingdom. In 1901 he was appointed Postmaster at Ohaeawai Bay of Island and in 1909 he became postmaster at Upper Hutt. Mr Comesky who was a valued officer of the Department was a well-known bowler. He has left a widow and several children, most of whom are grown up reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Ministerial Sympathy - The Postmaster General yesterday wrote to Mrs James Comeskey as follows " - Dear Madam, On behalf of myself and the officers of the Post and Telegraph Department, I desire to convey to you our profound sympathy in the deep affliction which has befallen you and your family in the awful disaster at Upper Hutt, whereby your husband so suddenly met his death. "In the demise of the late Mr Comeskey, the Public Service of the Dominion has lost a faithful and efficient servant and his fellow officers a friend whom they held in the highest esteem. Yours faithfully, R Heaton Rhodes, Postmaster-General" reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 01 April 1914 page 8

#Sarah Jane COMESKEY died 1936 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1936 folio website 1936/19469 age 76 born about 1860

#Sarah Jane COMESKEY died and was buried 1936 St Joseph's churchyard Upper Hutt

#Deaths – Comeskey – On 29 August 1936 at a private hospital Auckland Sarah Jane Comeskey of 105 Grange Road Mount Eden widow of the later James Comeskey aged 76 years RIP Interment at Upper Hutt Wellington No flowers by request reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Auckland Star 31 August 1936 page 1

#Sarah Jane COMESKEY widow Auckland from Upper Hutt probate files 1936 Wellington High Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 box 874 record 59513

1-1- Patrick Bernard COMESKEY born 1885 New Zealand died 1943 Upper Hutt New Zealand married 1919 New Zealand Gladys Elizabeth CUDBY born 26 March 1896 died 1979 New Zealand

#Patrick Bernard COMESKEY born 1885 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1885 folio website 1885/14378 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey

#Patrick Bernard COMESKEY Coalman New Zealand Railways Clevedon 1<sup>st</sup> Division Auckland WWI Reserve Rolls page 19

#Patrick Bernard COMESKEY Private service number 60073 occupation blacksmith Auckland Infantry Regiment A Company next of kin Mrs J Comeskey (mother) Brixton Road Mount Eden Auckland reference WWI Nominal Roll volume 3 roll 72 page 4

#Patrick Bernard COMESKEY married 1919 New Zealand Gladys Elizabeth CUDBY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1919 folio 4688

#Marriages – Comeskey=Cudby – On the 30<sup>th</sup> July 1919 at St Joseph's Church Upper Hutt by Rev Father Daly, Patrick Bernard eldest son of the late James Comeskey to Gladys Elizabeth third daughter of Mr J W Cudby both of Upper Hutt reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 13 August 1919 page 1

#Patrick Bernard COMESKEY died 1943 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1943 folio website 1943/17258 age 57 born about 1886

#Deaths – Comeskey – On 02 March 1943 at Upper Hutt Patrick Bernard beloved husband of Gladys and eldest son of the late James and Sarah Comeskey of Auckland RIP reference National Library of NZ papers past website Auckland Star newspaper 04 March 1943 page 1

#Gladys Elizabeth COMESKEY died 1979 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1979 folio website 1979/49951 born 26 March 1896

1-1-0- Leo James COMESKEY born about 1920 New Zealand died 05 October 1944 South Pacific

- #Leo James COMESKEY Flight Sergeant service number 428082 died 05 October 1944 age 24 (born about 1920) Royal New Zealand Air Force son of Patrick Bernard and Gladys Elisabeth Comeskey of Upper Hutt Wellington New Zealand buried Bourail memorial New Caledonia reference Commonwealth War Grave website
- 1-2- Mary Josephine COMESKEY born 1886 New Zealand died 1887 Auckland New Zealand (died young never married)  
#Mary Josephine COMESKEY born 1886 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1886 folio website 1886/14139 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#Mary Josephine COMESKEY died 1887 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1887 folio website 1887/6159 age 3 months born about 1886  
#Mary Josephine COMESKEY age 3 months buried Waikumete cemetery Auckland
- 1-3- Hubert Augustine COMESKEY born 1888 New Zealand died details unknown  
#Hubert Augustine COMESKEY [sic] born 1888 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1888 folio website 1888/5382 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#Searched but could not locate a NZ death registration for Hubert/Herbert Augustine Comeskey perhaps he died young and is recorded under a different spelling
- 1-4- Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY born 1889 New Zealand died details unknown  
#Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY born 1889 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1889 folio website 1889/763 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#W V M COMESKEY Post & Telegraph reference 1911 NZ Gazette page 3229  
#Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY Teacher reference 1933 NZ Gazette page 634  
#Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY spinster St Joseph's Convent Whakatane (1447) 1935 Bay of Plenty Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY Teacher reference 1940 NZ Gazette volume 1 page 509 Teachers register  
#Searched but could not locate a NZ death or marriage registration for Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY she may have become a Nun and is known by another name
- 1-5- Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY born 10 November 1892 Auckland New Zealand died 16 September 1916 killed in action in the field Somme France  
#Searched but could not locate a NZ birth registration for Peter Lei Cuthbert Comeskey but in his WWI service records it records birth date 10 November 1892 Auckland occupation linesman for Post Office Martinborough Wairarapa religion Roman Catholic  
#Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY private service number service number 10/2894 seventh reinforcement Wellington Infantry Battalion single last residence Post Office Martinborough Military district Wellington next of kin Mrs J Comeskey (mother) Upper Hutt NZEF (WWI) Nominal Roll Volume 1 page 73  
#Peter Le Cuthbert COMESKEY died reference RGO NZ WWI death registration 1918 folio website 1918/55380 age 23 born about 1895  
#Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY Private service number 10/2894 died 16 September 1916 age 23 (born about 1893) Wellington Regiment NZEF Ruahine Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion son of James and Sarah Comeskey of 105 Grange Road Dominion Road Auckland native of Wellington Caterpillar Valley (New Zealand) Memorial France reference Commonwealth War Grave website  
#Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY Linesman Martinborough 1918 Probate files Wellington Hugh Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 box 336 record 22501
- 1-6- Una Martha COMESKEY born 1894 New Zealand died 1968 New Zealand (never married)  
#Una Martha COMESKEY born 1894 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1894 folio website 1894/1918 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#Una Martha COMESKEY Nurse reference 1922 NZ Gazette page 327  
#Una Martha COMESKEY died 1968 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1968 folio website 1968/25403 age 75 born about 1893  
#Una COMESKEY date 02 January 1968 age 75 residence Mt Eden undertaker David Funeral Services cemetery Upper Hutt & buried 1968 St Joseph's Roman Catholic Churchyard Upper Hutt reference 275  
#Una Martha COMESKEY spinster place Auckland Court Auckland filed date 02 February 1968 type Will reference Archives NZ Auckland agency BBAE series 1570 record 226/1968

- 1-7- James Gerald COMESKEY born 28 March 1895 Auckland New Zealand died 29 July 1918 France (never married)  
#James Gerald COMESKEY born 1895 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1895 folio website 1895/8941 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#James COMESKEY private service number 10/3221 draft seventh Wellington Infantry Battalion single last residence Upper Hutt Military district Wellington next of kin Mrs S J Comeskey (mother) Upper Hutt NZEF (WWI) Nominal Roll Volume 1 page 73  
#James COMESKEY Corporal service number 10/3221 died 29 July 1918 age 23 (born about 1895) Wellington Regiment NZEF 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion son of James and Sarah Comeskey of Wellington New Zealand buried Gommecourt Wood New Cemetery Foncquevillers reference Commonwealth War Grave website  
#James COMESKEY Corporal killed accidentally bullet wound in head killed instantaneously 29 July 1918 in the Field Rouen France son of James and Sarah Comeskey of Wellington New Zealand buried Gommecourt Wood New Cemetery Foncquevillers reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AABK series 18805 accession W5530 box 89 record 0027319  
#James COMESKEY died 1918 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1918 folio website 1918/85393 age 22 born about 1896  
#James Ferald [sic Gerald] COMESKEY probate files Wellington high court filed date 16 May 1919 reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 accession W3265 box 388 record 26521
- 1-8- Daniel Augustine COMESKEY born 03 May 1897 New Zealand died 1975 Auckland New Zealand (never married)  
#Daniel Augustine COMESKEY born 1897 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1897 folio website 1897/7908 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#Daniel COMESKEY birth date 03 May 1897 parents James Comeskey address Upper Hutt School Upper Hutt admission date 22 March 1909 last school Ohaeawai Auckland last day 02 December 1910 destination St Patricks register number 1220  
#Daniel Augustine COMESKEY died 1975 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1975 folio website 1975/43673 born 03 May 1897  
#Daniel Augustine COMESKEY place Auckland Court Auckland filed date 17 September 1975 type Will reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6031 record 1198/1975
- 1-9- Kathleen Mary COMESKEY born 1898 New Zealand died 1951 Auckland New Zealand (never married)  
#Kathleen Mary COMESKEY born 1898 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1898 folio website 1898/616 parents Sarah Jane and James Comeskey  
#Kathleen Mary COMESKEY birth date 10 September 1898 parents James Comeskey address Upper Hutt School Upper Hutt admission date 22 March 1909 last school Ohaeawai Auckland last day 11 November 1911 destination Home ill register number 1221  
Miss K M COMESKEY Post & Telephone department reference 1922 NZ Gazette page 1129  
#Kathleen Mary COMESKEY died 1951 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1951 folio website 1951/24541 age 51 born about 1900  
#Kathleen M COMESKEY date 19 July 1951 age 51 place of residence Mt Eden undertaker Davis Funeral Services cemetery Upper Hutt Catholic & buried 1951 St Joseph's Churchyard Upper Hutt reference 216  
#Kathleen Mary COMESKEY occupation Telephonist place Mt Eden Court Auckland filed date 15 October 1951 type Will reference Archives NZ Auckland agency BBAE series 1570 box 1040 record 1863/1951
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- 2- **William Daniel FLYNN** born 1879 New Zealand died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand married 1909 New Zealand (no issue) Agnes MORAN (widow of **Christopher Henry CLAUSEN**) born about 1863-1864 died 1923 wellington New Zealand  
#William Daniel FLYNN born 1879 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1879 folio website 1879/3214 parents Ann and James FLYNN



#William Daniel FLYNN married 1909 New Zealand Agnes CLAUSEN / CLANSEN reference RGO NZ birth registration 1909 folio 6901 website 1909/8170

#1911 Hutt Electoral Roll William Daniel FLYNN Railway Porter Hutt road Hutt (2507) & Agnes FLYNN married Hutt Road Hutt (8223) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#William Daniel FLYNN died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3214 age 35 born about 1879

#William Daniel FLYNN died 1914 buried 31 March 1914 St Joseph's churchyard plot 9 Upper Hutt

#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis & Comesky James & Flynn William & Taylor George William & Vivian John Wesley reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 476 record number COR 1914/515 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719955

#William D Flynn was stationed at Upper Hutt. For the last seven years he had been engaged on trains in the Lambton Upper Hutt service and was well known by constant suburban travellers. He was married and leaves a wife and five step sons. He was born at Dunedin thirty-seven years ago reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single, John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington Agnes FLYNN married Hutt Road Hutt (2125) and/or 1914 Waipawa Electoral Roll Hawkes Bay Agnes FLYNN widow Gordon Street Dannevirke (6775) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll

#1919 Wellington South Electoral Roll Agnes FLYNN widow 16 Russell Terrace (9396) and/or 1919 Pahiatua Electoral Roll Manawatu-Wanganui Agnes FLYNN widow Gordon Street Dannevirke (1896) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll

#Agnes FLYNN died 1923 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1923 folio website 1923/1596 age 59 born about 1864

#Deaths – Flynn – On the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1923 At Wellington after a short illness Agnes Flynn late of Upper Hutt. Deeply regretted RIP. Private internment. No flowers (Dannevirke papers please copy) reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 10 August 1923 page 1

#The funeral of the late Agnes Flynn will leave St Anne's Church Green Street tomorrow Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> August 1923 at 9.30 am for the Cemetery Karori. Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 9 am. Private internment J E Taylor and Sons Undertakers Day and Night Tel 26-073 reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 10 August 1923 page 2

#Agnes FLYNN widow aged 59 year died buried 11 August 1923 Roman Catholic section plot 596 O record number 80299 at Karori cemetery Wellington record number 80299 reference Wellington City Council website Kaori cemetery database

#Karori cemetery area 07 block A row 27 plot 007 In loving memory of Agnes FLYNN who died 10 August 1923 age 63 years Sweet Jesus have mercy Also Mary CLAUSEN died 01 October 1953 age 65

Widow Mrs Agnes FLYNN details of her first marriage and issue

**2- Agnes MORAN** born about born about 1863 died August 1923 wellington New Zealand married 1891 New Zealand **Christopher Henry CLAUSEN** born about 1867 died 13 July 1907 Lower Hutt New Zealand (later widow Agnes married **William Daniel FLYNN**)

#Agnes MORAN married 1891 New Zealand Christopher CLAUSEN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1891 folio 2336 website 1891/1566

#Christopher Henry CLAUSEN died 1907 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1907 folio website 1907/5532 age 40 born about 1867

#Deaths – Clausen – On the 13<sup>th</sup> July at Bridge Street Lower Hutt result of an accident Christopher Henry the dearly beloved husband of Agnes Clausen and brother of Mrs H Millan and Mrs M Richless of Wellington deeply regretted reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 17 July 1907 page 1

#Christopher Henry CLAUSEN probate files 1907 Wellington High Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 accession W3265 box 188 record 10875

#Christopher Henry CLAUSEN Coroners Inquests case files 1907 Wellington Justice Department reference Archives NZ Wellington agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 box 339 record COR1907/689 use microfilm U 5445

#Accidents and fatalities - A bush casualty death of a sawmiller - At Whiteman's Valley Upper Hutt last Wednesday, Christopher Henry Clausen, a sawmiller met with an accident which ended fatally on Saturday. The circumstances were investigated at the house of deceased, Bridge Street Lower Hutt at 7 o'clock on Saturday evening by Mr Alexander Simpson deputy coroner. Evidence was given by William Baker, an employee of deceased. He stated that about noon last Wednesday he and deceased started to jack a log from the ground on to a trolley. The log would be about 20ft long and contain about 900 superficial feet of timber. They had almost accomplished their task when the chain from which deceased was jacking broke, causing one end of the log to fall. Deceased tried to jump clear but the log caught him and jammed him against a stump. Witness extricated deceased in about a minute's time by jacking the log clear of him. When he did this deceased remarked, "I'm done." Witness at once got assistance from the bush and carried him to the road, where he was placed on a vehicle and driven home. Michael Morran, brother in law of deceased stated that Mr Clausen was a married man about 40 years of age with a wife and five children. His wife was seriously ill and unable to attend the inquest. Dr Hector deposed that he was called to see deceased. He was then on his way from the Upper Hutt in charge of Dr Handcock. On Friday morning witness performed an operation with Drs Young and Ross and found an extensive internal hemorrhage. Death occurred next morning and was due to internal hemorrhage and shock. All that could be done for him was done. A verdict was returned in accordance with the medical testimony, no blame being attached to anyone reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 15 July 1907 page 8

#The Partnership hitherto existing between Messrs George Smith and Christopher Henry Clausen sawmillers has been dissolved reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 10 August 1907 page 6

#Notice is hereby given that the Partnership hitherto existing between GEORGE SMITH and CHRISTOPHER HENRY CLAUSEN, Sawmillers trading in Dannevirke under the name of Umutaoroa Sawmilling Company and in Lower Hutt under the name of Smith and Clausen, has by reason of the death of Mr Clausen been dissolved. All accounts against the firm must be rendered to George Smith Sawmiller Lower Hutt on or before Saturday 31st August, 1907. Notice is also given that all accounts against the estate of the late Christopher Henry Clausen must be rendered to the Executors care of George Smith, Sawmiller Lower Hutt, on or before above date reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 10 August 1907 page 6

2-0- Mary CLAUSEN born 04/21 May 1888 New Zealand died October 1953 Wellington New Zealand (never married)

NOT SURE#Mary CLAUSEN birth date 21 May 1888 parents C Clausen address Tahoraiti Dannevirke North School admission date 26 February 1895 last school Ormondville last day 19 December 1895 registration number 1011

NOT SURE#Mary CLAUSEN birth date 04 May 1888 parents Christopher Clausen address Tahoraiti Dannevirke North School admission date 07 February 1898 last school Waipawa last day 27 May 1902 destination side school registration number 1470 former 1011

NOT SURE#Mary CLAUSEN birth date 04 May 1888 parents Chris Clausen address Princess Street Dannevirke Dannevirke South School admission date 28 May 1902 last school Dannevirke North last day 20 May 1903 destination Home registration number 1470 former 1011

#Mary CLAUSEN spinster 16 Riddiford Street (9096) 1919 Wellington South Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls (also on the same electoral roll and at same address was Agnes FLYNN widow her mother so she has to be related)

- NOT SURE#Mary CLAUSEN died 1953 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1953 folio website 1953/30332 age 66 born about 1887
- NOT SURE#Mary CLAUSEN spinster died age 66 (born about 1887) buried 05 October 1953 Roman catholic section plot 596 O Kaori cemetery Wellington record number 80300reference Wellington City Council website Kaori cemetery database
- 2-1- Ellen CLAUSEN born 07 September 1892 New Zealand died details unknown
- #Ellen CLAUSEN born 1892 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1892 folio website 1892/10548 parents Agnes and Christopher Clausen
  - #Ellen CLAUSEN birth date 07 September 1892 parents C Clausen address Dannevirke South School records admission date 19 November 1901 registration number 381
  - #Search but could not locate a NZ death or marriage registration for Ellen Clausen
- 2-2- Dominic Augustine CLAUSEN born 04 August 1894 New Zealand died March 1944 Wellington New Zealand married 1912 New Zealand Ethel RIGBY born 26 April 1894 died 1982 New Zealand
- #Domecik [sic] CLAUSEN born 1893 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1893 folio website 1893/74 parents Agnes and Christopher Clausen
  - #Dominic CLAUSEN birth date 04 August 1894 parents C Clausen address Dannevirke South School records admission date 19 October 1901 registration number 361
  - #Dominic Augustine CLAUSEN married 1912 New Zealand Ethel RIGBY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1912 folio 7427 website 1912/118
  - #1919 Otaki Electoral Roll Wellington Dominic Augustine CLAUSEN farm hand Main Road Upper Hutt (849) & Ethel CLAUSEN married Main Road Upper Hutt (850) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
  - #1919 Wellington Suburbs Electoral Roll Wellington Dominic Augustine CLAUSEN brick maker Liardet Street (1951) & Ethel CLAUSEN married Liardet Street (1952) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
  - #Dominic may have been interred during World War Two (1939-1945) as I have been unable to locate him on an Electoral Roll
  - #Dominic CLAUSEN died 1944 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1944 folio website 1944/16700 age 52 born about 1892
  - #Dominic CLAUSEN died age 52 buried roman catholic section plot 307X 24 March 1944 Karori cemetery Wellington record 77811 reference Wellington City Council website Kaori cemetery database
  - #Ethel CLAUSEN widow Treadwell Place (12936) 1946 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
  - #Ethel CLAUSEN died 1982 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1982 folio website 1982/49319 born 26 April 1894
- 2-2-1- Vincent CLAUSEN born 1913 New Zealand
- #Vincent CLAUSEN born 1913 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1913 folio website 1913/8973 parents Ethel and Dominick Augustine Clausen
- 2-3- Clare CLAUSEN born 27 August 1896 New Zealand died 1974 New Zealand married 1934 New Zealand Ivan James DENTICE born about 1913 died 1951 New Zealand 2<sup>nd</sup> married 1956 New Zealand George REARDON born 11 September 1915 died 1975 New Zealand
- #Clare CLAUSEN birth date 27 August 1896 parents C Clausen address Dannevirke School Dannevirke South admission date 01 October 1901 record number 362
  - #Ivan James Davis DENTICE born 1919 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1919 folio website 1919/5215 parents Rosalyn Emmeline and Leopold Dentice
  - #Clare CLAUSEN married 1934 New Zealand Ivan James DENTICE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1934 folio 00964
  - #Ivan James DENTICE died 1951 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1951 folio website 1951/33759 age 38 born about 1913
  - #Clare DENTICE married 1956 New Zealand George REARDON reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1956 folio 11664
  - #George REARDON died 1974 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1974 folio website 1974/36798 born 11 September 1915
  - #Clare REARDON died 1993 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1993 folio website 1993/52311 born 14 June 1914

- 2-4- Aloysius CLAUSEN born 01 June 1900 died 1958 Palmerston North New Zealand married 1940 New Zealand Harriet TRANSOM born 08 July 1905 (or 1907 New Zealand) died 1977 New Zealand
- #Aloysius CLAUSEN born 1900 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1900 folio website 1900/11269 parents Agnes and Christopher Clausen
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN birth date 01 June 1900 parents/Guardian Mrs W FLYNN address Upper Hutt School records admission date 02 June 1914 last school Marist Brothers Wellington last day 18 September 1914 destination Dannevirke registration number 1800
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN sawyer 199 Ohiro Road (15539) 1938 Wellington West Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
  - #Harriet TRANSOM born 1907 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1907 folio website 1907/16355 parents Norah and Charles Transom
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN married 1940 New Zealand Harriet TRANSOM reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1940 folio 06513
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN farm hand Mangaweka (2058) & Harriet CLAUSEN married Mangaweka (2059) 1946 Rangitikei Electoral Roll Manawatu-Wanganui reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN farm hand Mangaweka (2074) & Harriet CLAUSEN married Mangaweka (2075) & Mary CLAUSEN spinster Russell Estate Ohingaiti (2076) 1949 Rangitikei Electoral Roll Manawatu-Wanganui reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN handy man Marshall East Rangiwahia (2197) & Harriet CLAUSEN married Marshall East Rangiwahia (2200) 1954 Rangitikei Electoral Roll Manawatu-Wanganui reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN shepherd Rangiwahia (2196) & Harriet CLAUSEN married Rangiwahia (2199) 1957 Rangitikei Electoral Roll Manawatu-Wanganui reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
  - #Aloysius CLAUSEN died 1958 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1958 folio website 1958/27227 age 57 born about 1901
  - #Harriet CLAUSEN died 1977 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1977 folio website 1977/35406 born 08 July 1905
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- 3- **Denis MAHONEY** (Constable) born about 1873 Ireland died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand married 1905 New Zealand **Mary Kate DENNEHY** born 1885 New Zealand died 09 September 1977 Konini New Zealand (married 1924 New Zealand Denis BROSNAN)
- #Mary Kate DENNEHY born 1885 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1885 folio website 1885/13477 parents Hannah and William Dennehy
  - #Denise MAHONEY constable Police Station Lambton Quay 1905-1906 Wellington North Electoral Roll
  - #Denis MAHONEY married 1905 New Zealand Mary DENNEHY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1905 folio 4343 website 1905/1889
  - #Denis MAHONEY Police Constable Station Street Upper Hutt & Mary MAHONEY married Station Street Upper Hutt 1911 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
  - #Denis MAHONEY died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3216 age 41 born about 1873
  - #Denis MAHONEY died 1914 buried 31 March 1914 St Joseph's churchyard plot 8
  - #Denis MAHONEY 1914 Probate files 1914 Wellington High Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 accession W3265 box 265 record 16471 item ID R22221936
  - #Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis & Comesky James & Flynn William & Taylor George William & Vivian John Wesley reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 476 record number COR 1914/515 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719955
  - #The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John

Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#The Unfortunate Men Biographical Sketches - The tragedy has removed from Upper Hutt one of the best known figures in the community in Constable Dennis Mahoney. He was an attendant at all public functions in the township during the last nine years, and he was universally liked. He was born in Ireland thirty eight years ago and on coming out to New Zealand he engaged in mining at Waihi and Karangahake. Fifteen years ago he joined the Police Force. He was a fine stamp of man and a noted athlete. He was an adept wrestler and a heavyweight lifter, he was first stationed at Lambton quay and later was transferred to Woodville. In 1905 he was placed in charge at Upper Hutt. The late constable who was well known throughout the Dominion, has left a wife and three young children reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Constable MAHONEY's brother in law was Daniel Dennehy a plumber in the Hutt

#Mary MAHONEY married C/- Mrs Dennehy Hutt (3861 & 4927) 1914 & 1919 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#The same committee expressed the opinion that the petition of Mary Mahoney of Wellington for further compensation on account of the loss of her husband at the Upper Hutt fire in 1914 should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 16 October 1919 page 7

#Another petition discussed was that of Mrs Mary Mahoney the widow of the late Constable Mahoney, who lost his life at the Upper Hutt in 1914 while engaged in attempting to save life from a burning building in which an explosion of benzene fumes had occurred. Mrs Mahoney had already received £500, but this money had been exhausted. Mr T M Wilford suggested that the best thing to do in the case of constable's widows where there is death in the execution of duty is to place the widows on the same footing as epidemic widows. The Government has been recommended to take the matter into favourable consideration. Mr Semple made a strong appeal for justice to this woman reference National Library of NZ papers past website Maoriland Worker newspaper 22 October 1919 page 5

#1919 Hutt Electoral Roll recorded a Mary Mahoney as C/- her sister in law Mrs Dennehy of the Hutt

#Mary MAHONEY widow 15 Coromandel Street 1919 Wellington East Electoral Roll (same address as daughter Denise's school records and relative William DENNEHY address)

#Mary Kate MAHONEY married 1924 Denis BROSNAHAN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1924 folio 07743 website 1924/5888

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN married Denis BROSNAHAN farmer Konini 1928 & 1935 & 1938 & 1946 & 1949 Pahiatua Electoral Roll & 1938 Masterton Electoral Roll

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN married Konini 1954 Pahiatua Electoral Roll

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN married Denis BROSNAHAN farmer Konini 1957 & 1963 Pahiatua Electoral Roll

#Denis BROSNAHAN died 1964 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1964 folio website 1964/30332 age 73 born about 1891

#In loving memory of Denis BROSNAHAN died 25<sup>th</sup> May 1964 aged 73 years RIP & age 78 died 25 May 1964 buried 27 May 1964 Mangatainoka cemetery Pahiatua

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN widow Konini 1969 Pahiatua Electoral Roll & housewife Bridge Road Konini 1972 & 1978 Pahiatua Electoral Roll

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN died 1977 Konini New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1977 folio website 1977/44715 age 92 born about 1885

#Mary Kate BROSNAHAN age 92 died 09 September 1977 buried 13 September 1977 Mangatainoka cemetery Pahiatua

1-1- Mary MAHONEY born 31 October 1906 New Zealand died 1992 New Zealand married 1937

New Zealand Alexander John BURNES born 24 February 1904 died 1985 New Zealand

#Mary MAHONEY born 31 October 1906 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1906 folio website 1906/20814 parents Mary Kate and Denis Mahony [sic]

#Mary MAHONEY spinster "Beaufort" Konini 1935 Pahiatua Electoral Roll

- #Mary MAHONEY married 1937 New Zealand Alexander John BURNES reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1937 folio 06531
- #Alexander John BURNES died 1985 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1985 folio website 1985/29979 born 24 February 1904
- #Mary BURNES died 1992 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1992 folio website 1992/52938 born 31 October 1906
- 1-2- Atholstan MAHONEY born 15 July 1908 Woodville New Zealand died 13 July 1979 New Zealand married 1949 New Zealand Kathleen Alice SHANNAHAN born 04 December 1909 died 1996 New Zealand
- #Atholstan MAHONEY born 1908 Woodville New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1908 folio website 1908/13219 parents Mary Kate & Denis Mahoney
- #Athol MAHONEY born 15 July 1908 guardian Denis Mahoney address Upper Hutt admission date 23 April 1913 last day 27 March 1914 destination Lower Hutt register number 1677 Upper Hutt School
- #Atholstan MAHONEY farmer Konini 1935 & 1938 Pahiatua & 1938 Masterton & 1946 Pahiatua Electoral Roll
- #Atholstan MAHONEY married 1949 New Zealand Kathleen Alice SHANNAHAN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1949 folio 07928
- #Athol/Atholstan MAHONEY farmer & Kathleen Alice MAHONEY Bridge Road Konini 1954 & 1957 & 1963 & 1969 & 1972 & 1978 Pahiatua Electoral Roll
- #Atholstan MAHONEY died 13 July 1979 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1979 folio website 1979/42846 born 15 July 1908 buried Pahiatua cemetery
- #Atholstan MAHONEY farmer Konini Palmerston North Court filed date 24 September 1979 Will Probate records reference Archives NZ Wellington AAOY W5461 0614/1979
- #Kathleen Alice MAHONEY died 1996 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1996 folio website 1996/36937 born 04 December 1909
- #Atholstan Beafort MAHONEY born 15 July 1908 age 70 died 13 July 1979 married buried 18 July 1979 & Kathleen Alice MAHONEY born 04 December 1909 age 86 died 26 May 1996 buried 28 May 1996 Mangatainola cemetery Pahiatua
- 1-3- Cedric MAHONEY born 1910 New Zealand died unknown
- #Cedric MAHONEY born 1910 June quarter Upper Hutt New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1910
- #Cedric MAHONEY Marist Brothers House Convent Road School teacher 1935 Napier Electoral Roll
- #Cedrick Leo MAHONEY teacher Lowe Street 1938 Gisborne Electoral Roll
- #Cedric Leo MAHONEY teacher 268 Bower Avenue 1954 Avon Electoral Roll
- #Cedric Leo MAHONEY teacher Richmond Road W1 1963 Grey Lynn Electoral Roll
- #Cedric L MAHONEY teacher 183 Richmond Road 1969 Grey Lynn Electoral Roll
- #Cedric L MAHONEY teacher St Paul's College 1972 Grey Lynn Electoral Roll
- #Cedric L/Leo MAHONEY teacher 183 Richmond Road 1978 & 1981 Auckland Central Electoral Roll
- #NOTE I have been unable to locate a death registration for Cedric but I was told that he became a Priest
- 1-4- Denise Josephine MAHONEY born 19 August 1914 Upper Hutt died 2015 New Zealand married 1948 New Zealand Charles Cyril BRIDGER born died
- #Denise Josephine MAHONEY born 19 August 1914 September quarter Upper Hutt reference RGO NZ birth registration 1914 folio website 1914/22266 parents Mary and Denise Money [born after death of father]
- #Denise MAHONEY admission date 03 February 1919 guardian Mrs Mahoney address 15 Coromandel Street Wellington destination Convent High School Wellington register number 257 ST Anne's School Wellington
- #Denise Josephine MAHONEY spinster Konini 1935 & 1938 Pahiatua & 1938 Masterton & 1946 Pahiatua Electoral Roll
- #Denise Josephine MAHONEY married 1948 New Zealand Charles Cyril BRIDGER reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1948 folio 03848
- #Denise Josephine BRIDGER married Ohope Whakatane & Charles Cyril DRIDGER motor mechanic 7 James Street Whakatane 1949 Bay of Plenty Electoral Roll

#Charles Cyril BRIDGER motor mechanic 6 Anzac Avenue Whakatane 1954 Bay of Plenty Electoral Roll  
#Denise Josephine BRIDGER married & Charles Cyril BRIDGER salesman 6 Anzac Avenue Whakatane 1957 & 1963 Bay of Plenty Electoral Roll  
#Charles Cyril BRIDGER died 1966 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1966 folio website 1966/28480 born age 49 = Not sure if correct  
#Denise Josephine BRIDGER died 2015 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 2015 folio website 2015/20220 born 19 August 1914

#### Mary Kate DENNEHY Family

- 0- William DENNEHY born about 1858 died 1932 Lower Hutt New Zealand married 1879 New Zealand Hannah BUCKLEY born about 1857 died 1931 Lower Hutt New Zealand  
#William DENNEHY ganger & Hannah married & Margaret spinster & John labourer Leary Street Hutt 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll  
#Hannah DENNEHY married 15 Coromandel Street 1928 Wellington Central Electoral Roll
- 0-1- William DENNEHY born 09 October 1880 New Zealand died 09 April 1959 Wellington married 17 April 1906 Wellington New Zealand Mary O'SHEA  
#William DENNEHY born 1880 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1880 folio website 1880/17452 parents Hannah and William Dennehy  
#William DENNEHY Lance Corporal 24/1966 labourer nok wife Mrs Mary Dennehy 45 Wallace Street Wellington reference nominal roll volume 2 roll 26 page 30
- 0-2- John DENNEHY born 1882 New Zealand  
#John DENNEHY born 1882 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1882 folio website 1882/9515 parents Hannah and William Dennehy
- 0-3- Michael David DENNEHY born 1883 New Zealand  
# Michael David DENNEHY born 1883 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1883 folio website 1883/13268 parents Hannah and William Dennehy  
#Michael DENNEHY clerk Head Office Railway Department Wellington Second Reserves B classification
- 0-4- Mary Kate DENNEHY born 1885 New Zealand  
#Mary Kate DENNEHY born 1885 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1885 folio website 1885/13477 parents Hannah and William Dennehy
- 0-5- Julia Agnes DENNEHY born 1886 New Zealand  
#Julia Agnes DENNEHY born 1886 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1886 folio website 1886/18634 parents Hannah and William Dennehy
- 0-6- Daniel Patrick DENNEHY born 04 January 1889 New Zealand  
#Daniel Patrick DENNEHY born 1889 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1889 folio website 1889/3388 parents Hannah and William Dennehy  
#Daniel DENNEHY Sapper 4/1917 plumber nok father W Dennehy Lower Hutt Wellington reference nominal roll volume 2 roll 26 page 22  
#Daniel DENNEHY plumber Main Road Hutt 1914 & 1919 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- 0-7- Margaret DENNEHY born 1890 New Zealand  
#Margaret DENNEHY born 1890 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1890 folio website 1890/17089 parents Hannah and William Dennehy
- 0-8- Bartholomew Joseph DENNEHY born 07 March 1892 Pukuera Southland New Zealand Killed in action 04 July 1916 France  
#Bartholomew Joseph DENNEHY born 1892 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1892 folio website 1892/16033 parents Hannah and William Dennehy  
#Bartholomew DENNEHY Billiard marker Albion Hotel Gisborne First Reserves Poverty Bay recruiting district  
#Bartholomew Joseph DENNEHY Private 10/2418 Wellington Infantry Battalion Samoan Advance and Fifth draft Single Lower Hutt nok father W Dennehy Railway Avenue Lower Hutt reference nominal roll volume 1
- 0-9- Edward Scanlan DENNEHY born 1894 Gore New Zealand died 29 January 1923 Wellington  
#Edward Scanlan DENNEHY born 1894 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1894 folio website 1894/15263 parents Hannah and William Dennehy

- #Edward Scanlon Private 8/2418 Otago Infantry Battalion Fifth draft Single Lower Hutt nok mother Mrs H Dennehy Railway Avenue Lower Hutt reference nominal roll volume 1
- 0-10- Owen Kelly DENNEHY born 1896 New Zealand  
#Owen Kelly DENNEHY born 1896 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1896 folio website 1896/7200 parents Hannah and William Dennehy  
#Owen DENNEHY Clerk Lower Hutt First Reserved Wellington recruiting district
- 0-11- Patrick Alphonsus DENNEHY born 1899 New Zealand  
#Patrick Alphonsus DENNEHY born 1899 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1899 folio website 1899/16045 parents Hannah and William Dennehy

#### MAHONEY Family that could be related

##### 0- Dennis and Mary MAHONEY

#Headstone In loving memory of Mary MAHONEY died 23 July 1909 Dennis MAHONEY died 05 April 1914 Annie SANDO died 30 July 1970 Karori cemetery Wellington Roman catholic section plot 431 record number 68766

- 0-1- John MAHONEY born 1885 New Zealand died 1945 New Zealand married 1914 New Zealand Florence May KEATCH born 14 April 1897 New Zealand died 1981 New Zealand  
#John MAHONEY born 1885 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1885 folio website 1885/2103 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
#According to James MAHONEY service records his medals were sent to his brother John MAHONEY who lived in Gladstone Road and later 105 Ballance Street Gisborne  
#Florence May KEATCH born 1897 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1897 folio website 1897/196 parents Clara Amelia and Charles Henry Keatch  
#John MAHONEY married 1914 New Zealand Florence May KEATCH reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1914 folio website 1914/4822  
#John MAHONEY plumber 30 Lynshurst Street (6503) & Florence May MAHONEY married 30 Lynshurst Street 1938 Gisborne Electoral Roll East Cape reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#John MAHONEY died 1945 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1945 folio website 1945/18488 age 60 born about 1885  
#John MAHONEY age 60 buried 22 May 1945 Taruheru cemetery Gisborne block 6 plot 4 warrant number 5520 reference Gisborne district Council website cemetery database  
#Florence May MAHONEY married 1948 New Zealand Cecil Robert CLAYDEN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1948 folio 11322  
#Florence May CLAYDEN died 1981 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1981 folio website 1981/36927 born 14 April 1897  
#Florence May CLAYDEN gas company employee Gisborne probate files 1981 High Court Gisborne reference Archives NZ Auckland Office agency BAJI series 1595 accession A1509 box 98 record 127/1981  
#Cecil Robert CLAYDEN died 1983 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1983 folio website 1983/46306 born 26 January 1902  
#Cecil Robert CLAYDEN gas company employee Gisborne probate files 1983 High Court Gisborne reference Archives NZ Auckland Office agency BAJI series 1595 accession A1509 box 120 record 127/198116/19831
- 0-2- Annie MAHONEY born 1886 New Zealand died 30 July 1970 New Zealand married date and place unknown Owen SANDO born about 1882 died 1942 New Zealand  
#Annie MAHONEY born 1886 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1886 folio website 1886/10772 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
#Annie SANDO married 69 Revans Street (9001) & Oscar SANDO painter 69 Revans Street (9002) 1914 Wellington East Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral roll  
#Oscar SANDO died 1942 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1942 folio website 1942/24912 age 60 born about 1882  
#Deaths – Sando – The friends of the late Oscar Sando of 3 Gorge Road Ngaio are invited to attend his Funeral which will leave the Chapel of E Morris Jun. Ltd., 25 Kent Terrace on Thursday 09 July 1942 at the conclusion of the service which commences at 10.30 am for the Crematorium Karori – E Morris Jun. Ltd. Funeral Directors 25 Kent Terrace Wellington



- reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 07 July 1942 page 1
- #Annie SANDO died 30 July 1970 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1970 folio website 1970/48022 age 84 born about 1886
- #Annie SANDO widow Wellington probate files 1970 Wellington High Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6031 accession W3265 box 462 record 0990/1970
- #Annie SANDO widow age 84 (born about 1886) burial service date 01 August 1970 funeral director Ninness Wearne & Jacobsen & Headstone transcription In loving memory of Mary MAHONEY died 23 July 1909 Dennis MAHONEY died 05 April 1914 Annie SANDO died 30 July 1970 Karori cemetery Wellington Roman catholic section plot 431 record number 68766 reference Wellington City Council website Kaori cemetery database
- 0-2-1- Oscar Gordon SANDO born 11 September 1906 New Zealand died 2001 New Zealand married 1938 New Zealand Elizabeth Phyllis CASE born 30 April 1912 died 2003 New Zealand
- #Oscar Gordon SANDO born 1906 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1906 folio website 1906/23747 parents Annie and Oscar Sando
- #Oscar Gordon SANDO married 1938 New Zealand Elizabeth Phyllis CASE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1938 folio 01352
- #Oscar Gordon SANDO died 2001 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 2001 folio website 2001/4199 born 11 September 1906
- #Elizabeth Phyllis SANDO died 2003 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 2003 folio website 2003/20284 born 30 April 1912
- 0-2-2- Victor William SANDO born 20 November 1908 New Zealand died 1978 New Zealand married 1953 New Zealand Barbara Spencer BABBAGE born 11 June 1918 died 1993 New Zealand
- #Victor William SANDO born 1909 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1909 folio website 1909/15162 parents Annie and Oscar Sando
- #Victor William SANDO married 1953 New Zealand Barbara Spencer BABBAGE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1953 folio 06417
- #Victor William SANDO died 1978 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1978 folio website 1978/48256 born 20 November 1908
- #Barbara Spencer SANDO died 1993 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1993 folio website 1993/53672 born 11 June 1918
- 0-2-3- Ronald John SANDO born 1911 New Zealand died 1966 New Zealand married 1946 New Zealand Nancy Laura WHITE
- #Ronald John SANDO born 1911 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1911 folio website 1911/17143 parents Annie and Oscar Sando
- #Ronald John SANDO married 1946 New Zealand Nancy Laura WHITE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1946 folio 07301
- #Ronald John SANDO died 1966 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1966 folio website 1966/43459 age 55 born about 1911
- 0-3- Cornelius Michael MAHONEY born 1887 New Zealand
- #Cornelius Michael MAHONEY born 1887 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1887 folio website 1887/8666 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney
- #Search but could not locate a NZ death registration for Cornelius Michael Mahoney he may have died young and was registered under a different spelling
- NO#Michael Cornelius MAHONEY died 1946 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1946 folio website 1946/25293 age 84 born about 1862
- NO #Cornelius MAHONEY died 1954 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1946 folio website 1954/33777 age 66 born about 1888
- 0-4- Mary Honora MAHONEY born 1888 New Zealand died 1913 New Zealand (never married)
- #Mary Honora MAHONEY born 1888 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1888 folio website 1888/7488 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney
- #Mary Theresa Honora MAHONEY died 1913 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1913 folio website 1913/242 age 23 born about 1890

- 0-5- Cornelius MAHONEY born 18 April 1888 New Zealand died August 1954 New Zealand married 1925 New Zealand Frances Mary O'NEILL born about 1896 died 14 April 1988 New Zealand  
#Cornelius MAHONEY born 1888 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1888 folio website 1888/14085 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
#Cornelius MAHONEY Private service number 8/2444 Canterbury Infantry Battalion birth date 18 April 1890 Wellington occupation Farm Hand Linton Manawatu next of kin sister Mrs Sando 69 Revans Street Wellington reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AABK series 18805 accession W5544 box 106 record 0077023 NZ Defence Force  
#Cornelius MAHONEY married 1925 New Zealand Frances O'NEILL reference RGO NZ married registration 1925 folio 00851  
#Cornelius MAHONEY died 1954 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1954 folio website 1954/33777 age 66 born about 1888  
#Cornelius MAHONEY occupation Watersider age 66 (born about 1888) buried 05 August 1954 Karori cemetery Wellington soldier section plot 35 F/4 record number 91148 Wellington City Council website Karori cemetery database  
#Frances Mary MAHONEY died 14 April 1988 age 92 (born about 1896) cremated 18 April 1988 record number 59069 reference Wellington City Council Karori cemetery database
- 0-6- James MAHONEY born 20 October 1889 Wellington New Zealand died 08 June 1917 killed in action in the field of France Belgium  
#James MAHONEY born 1889 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1889 folio website 1889/12787 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
NOT SURE #James MAHONEY / MAHONY married 1915 New Zealand Elsie Muriel O'BRIEN reference RGO NZ married registration 1915 folio 02085  
#James MAHONEY sergeant service number 14200 birth date 20 October 1889 Wellington occupation cabinetmaker last address 31 Wanganui Avenue Auckland next of kin sister Mrs O Sando Revans Newtown later Main Road Ngaio Wellington killed in action in the fields of France Belgium reference Archives NZ Wellington NZ Defence Force agency AABK series 18805 accession W5544 box 106 record 0077032  
#James MAHONEY service number 14200 died 08 June 1917 age 26 (born about 1891) New Zealand Rifle Brigade 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> company son of Dennis and Mary Mahoney Native of Wellington buried Messines Ridge memorial Belgium reference Commonwealth War Grave website  
#James MAHONEY died 1918 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1918 folio website 1918/52750 age 27 born about 1891
- 0-7- Mary MAHONEY born 1891 New Zealand  
#Mary MAHONEY born 1891 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1891 folio website 1891/17885 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
NO #Mary MAHONEY died 1909 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1909 folio website 1909/5048 age 47 born about 1862  
NO #Headstone In loving memory of Mary MAHONEY died 23 July 1909 Dennis MAHONEY died 05 April 1914 Annie SANDO died 30 July 1970 Karori cemetery Wellington Roman catholic section plot 431 record number 68766
- 0-8- Julia MAHONEY born 27 September 1892 New Zealand died 1973 New Zealand married 1916 New Zealand John Donaldson HENDERSON born about 1892 died 1970 New Zealand  
#Julia MAHONEY born 1892 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1892 folio website 1892/12535 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney  
#Julia MAHONEY married 1916 New Zealand John Donaldson HENDERSON reference RGO NZ married registration 1916 folio 1466  
#John Donaldson HENDERSON died 1970 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1970 folio website 1970/48246 age 78 born about 1892  
#Julia HENDERSON died 1973 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1973 folio website 1973/27164 born 27 September 1892
- 0-9- Dennis Norman Gregory MAHONEY born 1892 New Zealand died 1964 New Zealand married 1920 New Zealand Sylvia Zeehan KILDUFF born 04 May 1891 died 1981 New Zealand

- #Dennis Norman Gregory MAHONEY born 1892 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1892 folio website 1892/16809 parents Mary and Dennis Mahoney
  - #Dennis Norman Gregory MAHONEY married 1920 New Zealand Sylvia Zeehan KILDUFF reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1920 folio website 1920/7204
  - #Denis Norman Gregory MAHONEY died 1964 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1964 folio website 1964/27342 age 71 born about 1893
  - #Sylvia Zeehan MAHONEY died 1981 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1981 folio website 1981/37498 born 04 May 1891
  - 0-10- Rosetta MAHONEY born 11 February 1895 New Zealand died 1990 New Zealand married 1937 New Zealand John Joseph Alfred HOARE born about 1900 died 1965 New Zealand
  - #Rosetta MAHONEY born 1895 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1895 folio website 1895/3490 parents Mary and Denis Mahoney
  - #Rosetta MAHONEY married 1937 New Zealand John Joseph Alfred HOARE reference RGO NZ married registration 1937 folio 05022
  - #John Joseph Alfred HOARE died 1965 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1965 folio website 1965/37409 age 65 born about 1900
  - #Rosetta HOARE died 1990 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1990 folio website 1990/37928 born 11 February 1895
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- 4- Virgil Francis MCGOVERN** born about 1889 Kaitangata Otago New Zealand died 27 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand (never married)
- #Search but could not locate a NZ birth registration for Virgil Francis MCGOVERN but his parents were Annie (perhaps Laughlin perhaps died 1957 in Lawson NSW Australia) and Francis Joseph McGovern (born about 1856 died 1906 New Zealand buried St Joseph's Upper Hutt)
  - #Virgil may have had a sibling Ellen Frances Marion McGovern who was born 1902 New Zealand and perhaps 2 other siblings John McGovern born 1885 and Michael Vergilius McGovern born 1887 who recorded parents as Annie and Frank McGovern
  - #St Patrick college Distribution of Prizes – General Prizes Preparatory school next in merit Virgil McGovern – Preparatory school author grammar and geography second division next in merit Virgil McGovern – Reading and spelling first division next in merit Virgil McGovern Writing and exercises first division next in merit Virgil McGovern – Arithmetic second division next in merit Virgil McGovern reference National Library of NZ Papers past website New Zealand Tablet 07 December 1899 page 4
  - #St Patricks College Wellington Annual distribution of Prizes – Special Prizes Good conduct Preparatory Virgil McGovern – General Prizes Drill Third division Virgil McGovern 2<sup>nd</sup> - Preparatory School English course next in merit Virgil McGovern – Catechism second division Virgil McGovern – Preparatory school Arithmetic first division Virgil McGovern reference National Library of NZ Papers past website New Zealand Tablet 13 December 1900 page 20
  - #Also St Patrick's prizes for Virgil McGovern in 1901
  - #Virgil MCGOVERN Dentists assistant King Street Upper Hutt (4737) & Annie MCGOVERN widow King Street Upper Hutt (4736) 1911 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
  - #The Candidates - Taking the candidates in the order of their nomination we find that the nominations were lodged in the following order Virgil McGovern, nominated by J.W Cudby, J. Brown (NZR), J Harrison and H Shaw. Nomination paper lodged on Monday evening March 15 – Virgil McGovern is a young New Zealander born at Kaitangata (Otago), a quarter of a century ago. He was educated primarily at Kaitangata and Taita State Schools and afterwards attended a three years course at St Patrick's College. He has considerable interests at stake in the township, the McGovern properties being valued at over £5,000 for rating purposes. This candidate has taken a keen interest in local politics and sports for the past ten years. At the Biennial Election of 1912 he withdrew his nomination on the Advance Upper Hutt policy side so as to avoid splitting votes. On March 4th while travelling to Wellington W Greig suggested V McGovern that if McGovern would stand for election he (Greig) would not be a candidate. Seeing that at the close of last Monday's town board

meeting no one had been nominated, McGovern decided to become a candidate and lodged a nomination. He is in favour of carefully thought out progressive measures and is averse to increasing the present rates on properties. He is announced to address a public meeting in the town hall on Tuesday next at 8 pm reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 21 March 1914 page 2

#Virgil Francis MCGOVERN died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3221 age 25 born about 1889

#Virgil Francis MCGOVERN buried 1914 St Joseph's Churchyard Upper Hutt

#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – McGovern Virgil reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 477 record number COR 1914/518 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719958

#Virgil Francis MCGOVERN 1914 Probate files 1914 Wellington High Court reference Archives NZ Wellington agency AAOM series 6029 accession W3265 box 266 record 16539 item ID R22219911

#The Eighth Victim – Wellington 27 April – Widespread regret will be felt at the death of the eight victim of the Hutt disaster Mr Virgil Francis McGovern who died at the Hospital at 7.50 o'clock last evening. Death was not unexpected deceased having been in a critical condition for some time. Mr McGovern was one of the most popular young men in the Hutt district reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Fielding Star newspaper 27 April 1914 page 3

#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#MCGOVERN In loving memory of Virgil McGovern who was accidentally killed on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1914 Upper Hutt explosion – Inserted by his comrades reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 19 April 1915 page 1

#Local Elections Upper Hutt Town Board - Edwin B Elliott who was elected to the board in 1914 on the death of Virgil McGovern (R.I.P.) offers himself for re-election for a third term reference National Library of NZ Papers Past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 14 September 1918 page 2

#Virgil was son of the late Mr Francis MCGOVERN who kept hotels in Kaiwairā, Taitā and Trentham

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**5- Evard Edward Henry PELLING** born 1895 New Zealand died 30 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand (never married)

#Evard Edward Henry PELLING born 1895 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1895 folio website 1895/16542 parents Lydi (Lydia) Sarah Ruth and Edward PELLING

#Lydia Sarah Ruth PELLING married Upper Hutt (5658) & Edward PELLING baker Upper Hutt (5657) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls (parents)

#Evard Edward Henry PELLING died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3217 age 18 born about 1896

#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Pelling Evard Edward Henry reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 477 record number COR 1914/517 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719957

#Everard E H PELLING 18 years of age blacksmith's assistant succumbed to injuries in the Hospital last Monday [Photograph of Everard] & A Seventh Victim – Young Pelling expired in the Hospital – At one fell blow, the explosion had claimed seven lives. Of the injured fears were entertained that one or two would not survive many hours. No one therefore was surprised on Monday night to learn that another name had to be added to the sad death roll. This was that of Everard Edward Henry Pelling a lad only 18 years of age who had

succumbed to his injuries that afternoon. Deceased was the son of Mr Edward H Pelling of Upper Hutt and his injuries were confined to the head, the base of the skull being severely fractured. He lingered unconscious throughout Monday and was unable to recognise his father and mother when they visited him in the morning. Death intervened at 4.45 pm without the lad having regained consciousness reference National Library of NZ Papers past website NZ Truth newspaper 04 April 1914 page 5

#The late Everard Pelling was accorded a military funeral to-day reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Wairarapa Daily Times newspaper 01 April 1914 page 5

#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling [sic] blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#Evard's father Edward PELLING was a boarding house keeper at Upper Hutt not Evard as mentioned in the newspaper article

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**6- George William TAYLOR** born about May 1894 New Zealand died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand (never married)

#George William TAYLOR born 1894 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1894 folio website 1894/3511 parents Isabella (SUTHERLAND) and George Joseph TAYLOR (George was their oldest son)

#George Joseph TAYLOR Gardner Upper Hutt (7005) & Isabella TAYLOR married Upper Hutt (7008) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls (parents)

#George William TAYLOR died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3218 age 20 born about 1894

#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis & Comesky James & Flynn William & Taylor George William & Vivian John Wesley reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 476 record number COR 1914/515 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719955

#In loving memory of George Joseph beloved husband of Isabella TAYLOR died 02 July 1943 age 82. In loving memory of George William dearly beloved son of George Joseph and Isabella TAYLOR died 29 March 1914 aged 19 years and 10 months. In loving memory of Betty Gertrude daughter of Arthur and Alice TAYLOR died 31 May 1926 aged 17 months. Erected by the employees of the N.Z. Railways buried Wallaceville cemetery

#Wallaceville cemetery 29 March 1914 George William dearly beloved son of George Joseph and Isabella TAYLOR died 29 March 1914 age 19 years 10 months – Emily Margaret TAYLOR died 28 August 1979 age 83 years – (second side) Isabella wife of George Joseph TAYLOR died 29 November 1932 age 72 years. "Peace Perfect Peace" Betty Gertrude daughter of Arthur and Alice TAYLOR died 31 May 1926 age 17 months With Jesus

#Wallaceville cemetery burial register George TAYLOR block B plot 23 occupation Porter Rly locality Upper Hutt purchaser G Taylor minister Rev Usher undertaker P Robertson burial date 31 March 1914 age 21 years

#George William TAYLOR died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3218 age 20 born about 1894

#Walter George Taylor was only 19 years of age and resided with his parents at Upper Hutt. He joined the Railway Department two years ago and was making good progress reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

**7- Michael John TOOHEY / TOUHEY** born about 1875 Tasmania died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand (never married)

#Michael John TOOHEY died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914 folio website 1914/3219 age 39 born about 1875

#Michael John TOUHEY died and was buried 31 March 1914 St Joseph's churchyard plot 11 Upper Hutt

#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Toohey Michael reference Archives NZ Wellington Office Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group J46 Box 477 record number COR 1914/516 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719956

#The dead are: - Michael Tuohey (Bridge contractor) - Tuohey was about 28 and is said to have been employed by the Maymorn Estate Sawmilling Company – Tuohey was standing on the balcony at the corner of the Provincial hotel next to the fire playing a small hose on the side of the hotel and the force of the explosion blew him back on the veranda and he was badly injured dying after admission to the hospital. Mr Crabtree the licensee who was standing beside Tuohey was thrown to the ground and escaped unhurt reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#Mr Michael Toohey was born in Tasmania about fifty-five years ago and was employed in sawmills in that country before he came to New Zealand. He was a fine axe man and was in the employ of the Maymorn Estate Company for some time reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Ernest Crabtree licensee of the Provincial Hotel Upper Hutt, situated on the southern side of Bengie and Pratt's building with a right of way between the two buildings, said he was waiting for a friend to arrive from town and was with his wife on the veranda, when Mrs Crabtree said Good God Bengie and Pratt's is on fire. The two then gave the alarm. Witness got his sick mother in law down. He helped in getting the goods out of Bengie and Pratt's. He saw at that time Vivian, Mahoney, Pratt and Michael Toohey. They worked for about ten or fifteen minutes and then Mahoney said the hotel was a fire. Witness went out and put a ladder up against the side of the hotel. He and Toohey got a hose and were playing it on the north side of the hotel. Toohey was on the top of one ladder and witness was on another, but lower down when he heard a noise like a cannon. Witness knew no more for a few minutes, until the porter told him the veranda was on fire. Witness came across the body of Toohey lying across a seat on the balcony at the north end of the building. Witness and the porter helped to carry Toohey down to the street where he was attended by the doctor. Toohey was employed at the Maymorn sawmill and was a permanent boarder. The explosion smashed all the windows in the hotel bar and broke nearly all the bottles. The front door was blown clean out and the back door was smashed. The north side of the hotel was damaged by the debris reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 04 April 1914 page 9

#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4

#Note - Michael TOOHEY boarded at the Provincial hotel and Mr CRABTREE was the proprietor

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**8- John Wesley VIVIAN** born 1879 Dunedin New Zealand died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand (never married but was engaged at the time of death)

#John Wesley VIVIAN born 1879 Dunedin New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1879 folio website 1879/7894 parents Sarah Ann and Francis VIVIAN (also Francis VIVIAN

born 1879 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1879 folio website 1879/7893  
parents Sarah Ann and Francis Vivian = perhaps John Wesley's twin brother)  
#Francis VIVIAN Storeman Lawrence freehold section 16 of block xii Lawrence (1113) 1880-  
1881 Tuapeka Electoral Roll Otago & Francis VIVIAN Storeman Lawrence (5838) 1911 Bruce  
Electoral Roll Otago reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll (parent)  
#John Wesley VIVIAN Grocers assistant Hutt (5844) 1905-1906 Hutt Electoral Roll reference  
Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls & John Wesley VIVIAN Grocers assistant  
Lower Hutt (7275) 1911 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral  
Rolls  
#John Wesley VIVIAN died 1914 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1914  
folio website 1914/3220 age 34 born about 1880  
#Corners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis & Comesky James & Flynn William  
& Taylor George William & Vivian John Wesley reference Archives NZ Wellington Office  
Coroners Inquests case files Justice Department Agency ACGS series 16231 record group  
J46 Box 476 record number COR 1914/515 and on microfilm U 5474 Item ID R23719955  
#In the afternoon John Wesley VIVIAN was interred the Rev J MCCAWE (Presbyterian)  
conducting the service in the presence of a large gathering of mourners (Taita cemetery  
Lower Hutt) reference National Library of NZ Papers past website New Zealand Herald  
newspaper 01 April 1914 page 10  
#Late John Wesley VIVIAN 32 years of age was to have been married in three months' time  
[photograph] Photo from old Kia-ora Football Club group reference National Library of NZ  
Papers past website NZ Truth newspaper 04 April 1914 page 5  
#John W Vivian a grocer's assistant was also a native of Dunedin. He was 35 years of age  
and for some time he was in business for himself at Lower Hutt reference National Library of  
NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7  
#The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky  
postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single, John  
Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush  
worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling  
blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee  
reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30  
March 1914 page 4  
#In Memoriam - Vivian – In loving memory of John Wesley Vivian of Lawrence who lost his life  
in an explosion at Upper Hutt Wellington on 28 March 1914 reference National Library of NZ  
Papers past website Otago Daily Times 27 March 1915 page 8

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## INJURED WHILE ASSISTING WITH THE FIRE AND EXPLOSION

(pages 22 to 24)

1. Henry Allan Miller ANDERSON
2. Albert George COLLETT
3. Thomas Joseph COSTELLO
4. James Edward Patrick HAGAN
5. Charlton Douglas MORPETH
6. Richard Fisher STORY
7. Clarence (Charles) WALTERS
8. S H (Frank Bertram) WEAVER or Herbert WEAVER

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1- Henry Allen Millar ANDERSON born 1880 New Zealand died 1958 New Zealand (Railway signalman residing Upper Hutt)  
#Henry Allen Millar ANDERSON born 1880 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1880 folio website 1880/15388 parents Ann and Robert Anderson  
#Henry Allan Millar ANDERSON signalman Seddon Street Upper Hutt (148) 1928 Wairarapa Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Henry Allen Millar ANDERSON died 1958 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1958 folio website 1958/34026 age 77 born about 1881

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2- Albert George COLLETT born 1874 New Zealand died 1956 New Zealand (local chairman of Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants) married 1898 New Zealand Mary Emily SMITH born 1874 New Zealand died 1949 New Zealand  
#Albert George COLLETT born 1874 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1874 folio website 1874/43296 parents Mary Ann and Thomas George Collett  
#Mary Emily SMITH born 1874 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1874 folio website 1874/34045 parents Mary and George Joseph Smith  
#Albert George COLLETT married 1898 New Zealand Mary Emily SMITH reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1898 folio website 1898/1529  
#Albert George COLLETT ganger NZR Station Street Upper Hutt (1276) & Mary Emily COLLETT married Station Street Upper Hutt (1290) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Mary Emily COLLETT died 1949 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1949 folio website 1949/25872 age 77 born about 1872  
#Albert George COLLETT died 1956 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1956 folio website 1956/28333 age 82 born about 1874

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3- Thomas Joseph COSTELLO born 1886 New Zealand died 1961 New Zealand (Shunter at Upper Hutt) married 1913 New Zealand Moss ROSE born about 1891 died 1958 New Zealand  
#Thomas Joseph COSTELLO born 1886 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1886 folio website 1886/17013 parents Margaret and John Costello  
#Thomas Joseph COSTELLO married 1913 New Zealand Moss ROSE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1913 folio website 1913/3715  
#Thomas Joseph COSTELLO railway porter Brown Street Upper Hutt (1404) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll  
#Moss COSTELLO died 1958 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1958 folio website 1958/37262 age 67 born about 1891  
#Thomas Joseph COSTELLO died 1961 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1961 folio website 1961/34889 age 74 born about 1887

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- 4- James Edward Patrick HAGAN born about 1867 died 1953 New Zealand (age 50 years Caretaker Trentham rifle range Defence Force staff) married Gertrude PRUDEN born about 1867 died 1944 New Zealand  
#James Edward HAGAN married 1892 New Zealand Gertrude PRUDEN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1892 folio 2273 website 1892/2157  
#James Edward Patrick HAGAN caretaker Trentham (2546) & Gertrude married Upper Hutt (2544) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Gertrude HAGAN died 1944 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1944 folio website 1944/28029 age 77 born about 1867  
#James Patrick Edward HAGEN [sic] died 1953 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1953 folio website 1953/22228 age 86 born about 1867
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- 5- Charlton Douglas MORPETH born 1869 New Zealand died 1952 New Zealand (Accountant Wellington) married 1896 New Zealand Florence Euphemia POPE born 1871 New Zealand died 1931 New Zealand  
#Charlton Douglas MORPETH born 1869 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1869 folio website 1869/11979 parents Helen and William Johnston Morpeth  
#Florence Euphemia POPE born 1871 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1871 folio website 1871/35363 parents Hellen Grant and James Henry Pope  
#Charlton Douglas MORPETH married 1896 New Zealand Florence Euphemia POPE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1896 folio website 1896/4372  
#Charlton Douglas MORPETH accountant 246 The Terrace (4162) Florence Euphemia MORPETH married 246 The Terrace (4164) 1914 Wellington North Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Florence Euphemia MORPETH died 1931 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1931 folio website 1931/12978 age 60 born about 1871  
#Charlton Douglas MORPETH died 1952 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1952 folio website 1952/22198 age 83 born about 1869
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- 6- Richard Fisher STORY born about 1876 died 08 July 1950 Cumberland England (Tablet porter at Upper Hutt)  
#Richard Fisher STORY born 1876 Carlisle Cumberland reference Ancestry website RGO UK birth registration 1876 March quarter county Carlisle County Cumberland volume 10b page 553  
#Richard Fisher STORY railway porter Koputarua (4582) 1914 Otaki Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Richard Fisher STORY died 08 July 1950 age 74 born about 1876 reference Ancestry website RGO UK death registration 1950 September quarter district Border County Cumberland volume 1a page 3 (of Dykenook Blackford Westlinton Cumberland)
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- 7- Clarence (Charles) WALTERS born 1885 New Zealand died 15 July 1916 France (Signalman at Upper Hutt)  
#Clarence WALTERS born 1885 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1885 folio website 1885/16484 parents Alice and John Harris Walters  
#Clarence WALTERS signalman Russell Street Upper Hutt (6367) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Clarence WALTERS died 1918 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1918 folio website 1918/63595 age 31 born about 1887  
#Clarence WALTERS Rifleman service number 24/2114 New Zealand Rifle Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> Company died 15 July 1916 son of Mr and Mrs J Walters of Orari South Canterbury New Zealand buried Cite Bonjean Military cemetery Armentries France reference Commonwealth War Grave website
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8- Frank Bertram (S H) WEAVER born about 1884 died 1962 New Zealand (Engine driver and chairman of the local branch of Locomotive Engine drivers and Firemen's Association) married 1908 New Zealand Catherine Elizabeth SINDEN born about 1885 died 1957 New Zealand

#Many others were less seriously injured including the following (various names plus) S H Weaver engine driver and chairman of the local branch of the Locomotive Engine drivers and Firemen's Association reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Frank Bertram WEAVER engine driver 4 Upton Terrace (6174) & Catherine Elizabeth married 4 Upton Terrace (6173) 1914 Wellington North Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#Frank Bertram WEAVER married 1908 New Zealand Catherine Elizabeth SINDEN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1908 folio website 1908/8231

#Catherine Elizabeth WEAVER died 1957 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1957 folio website 1957/22501 age 72 born about 1885

#Frank Bertram WEAVER died 1962 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1962 folio website 1962/40434 age 78 born about 1884

OR

8- Herbert WEAVER (railway servant who was also injured)

#Injured Herbert Weaver (plus other names) reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6

#In the shop were so far as can be ascertained (various names) Herbert Weaver reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Another railway servant who is hurt is Mr Herbert Weaver. He is suffering from shock and also from injuries to his legs reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 8

#There is yet the grave possibility of the list of fatally injured being added to [1] Herbert Collett [2] Herbert Weaver [3] T Thomas [4] E Crabtree reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6

#Messrs Collett and Weaver both prominent railway men were injured about the legs and will be unable to get about for some time reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

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## PEOPLE WHO ASSISTED WITH THE DISASTER & ENQUIRY

(Pages 25 to 33)

1. Albert George COLLETT
2. Ernest CRABTREE & Mrs Emma May CRABTREE
3. Philip David DAVIS
4. Daniel DENNEHY
5. Percival Thomas EDWARDS
6. Mr H EDWARDS
7. Walter GALES
8. William George GOSS
9. James Percival HALL
10. Samuel HILL
11. Merton HORTON
12. Mr HOWE
13. Andrew HUNTER
14. Doctor Frederick William KEMP (also Dr Fred Thompson BOWERBANK & Dr James Robert PURDIE & Dr Charles Munroe HECTOR)
15. George Laban LAY
16. Robert George MABEY
17. Constable John MELVILLE
18. Mr MILLIGAN
19. Owen Edward PHILLIPS
20. Mr SMITH
21. Percy Victor STOTT
22. Ernest Charles THOMAS
23. James Grace TWOHILL
24. W WILKINSON
25. Norman Randolph WILLIAMS

- 
1. Albert George COLLETT (NZR ganger Station Road Upper Hutt) born 1874 New Zealand died 1956 New Zealand married 1898 New Zealand Mary Emily SMITH  
#In the shop were so far as can be ascertained (various names) A G Collett reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7  
#There is yet the grave possibility of the list of fatally injured being added to [1] Herbert Collett [2] Herbert Weaver [3] T Thomas [4] E Crabtree reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6  
#War Medal neighbourhood Trentham Slaps Johannesburg Diamond Hill Cape Colony Orange Free State Trooper 488, 1905 J754 Return to A G Collett Station Street reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 23 January 1915 page 1  
#Albert George COLLETT ganger NZR Station Road Upper Hutt (1276)& Mary Emily COLLETT married Station Road Upper Hutt (1290) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Albert George COLLETT born 1874 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1874 folio website 1874/43296 parents Mary Ann and Thomas George Collett  
#Albert George COLLETT married 1898 New Zealand Mary Emily SMITH reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1898 folio website 1898/1529  
#Albert George COLLETT died 1956 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1956 folio website 1956/28333 age 82 born about 1874
  2. Ernest CRABTREE & Mrs Emma May CRABTREE (licensee Provincial Hotel Upper Hutt) born about 1886 died 1954 New Zealand married 1910 New Zealand Emma May BRIGHOUSE born about 1889 died 1970 New Zealand  
#Ernest Crabtree hotelkeeper South Norsewood (1422) & Emma May Crabtree married Junction Hotel South Noreswood (1421) 1911 Waipawa Electoral Roll Hawkes Bay reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

- #There is yet the grave possibility of the list of fatally injured being added to [1] Herbert Collett [2] Herbert Weaver [3] T Thomas [4] E Crabtree reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6
- #Ernest Crabtree, licensee of the Provincial Hotel Upper Hutt, situated on the southern side of Benges and Pratt's building with a right of way between the two buildings, said he was waiting for a friend to arrive from town and was with his wife on the veranda when Mrs Crabtree said, Good God Benges and Pratt's is on fire. The two then gave the alarm reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 04 April 1914 page 9
- #Notice of application for transfer of license – I Ernest Crabtree of the Upper Hutt, being the holder of a Publican's License in respect of the house and premises situate at Main Road, Upper Hutt and known by the sign of the Provincial Hotel, do hereby give notice that I desire to obtain and will at the next Licensing Meeting to be holden at the Magistrate's Court Lower Hutt on the Third day of June 1914 apply for a transfer of the said License from myself to Mary Ellen Young my appointee. Dated 22nd day of April 1914 (Signed) E Crabtree reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 07 May 1914 page 1
- #Ernest CRABTREE married 1910 New Zealand Emma May BRIGHOUSE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1910 folio website 1910/632
- #Ernest CRABTREE died 1954 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1954 folio website 1954/30008 age 68 born about 1886
3. Philip David DAVIS (settler Upper Hutt) born 1872 New Zealand died 1952 New Zealand married 1896 New Zealand Emily Alice JUDD born about 1874 died 1961 New Zealand
- #Philip DAVIS stated that the building occupied by Messrs Benges and Pratt was one of the oldest in the district. He did not know to what purpose Benges and Pratt used their upstairs rooms nor could he say whether they sold explosives or not reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Wairarapa Daily Times 03 April 1914 page 5
- #Philip David Davis a settler residing at Upper Hutt gave evidence that the buildings destroyed were very old. He produced a locality plan. The gas generator plant of Messrs Benges and Pratt was at the back of the building. The grocery department was about 25ft by 23ft. with an 8ft 6in stud and the drapery department 21ft by 13ft. The upstairs portion was divided into four rooms about 13ft by 11ft each reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 04 April 1914 page 3
- #Philip David DAVIS insurance agent Upper Hutt (1614) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
- #Philip David DAVIS born 1872 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1872 folio website 1872/20489 parents Mary & Phillip David Davis
- #Phillip David DAVIS married 1896 New Zealand Emily Alice JUDD reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1896 folio website 1896/938
- #Phillip David DAVIS died 1952 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1952 folio website 1952/320403 age 80 born about 1872
4. Daniel DENNEHY (plumber main road Lower Hutt & brother in law of Constable Mahoney) born about 1881 died 1947 Wellington New Zealand married perhaps Catherine Mary DENNEHY born about died 23 July 1964 Wellington New Zealand
- #Daniel Dennehy plumber residing at Main Road Lower Hutt brother in law of the late Constable Mahoney said he arrived on the scene of the fire by the special train on its return from town at 4 o'clock on Sunday morning. He was informed that Constable Mahoney's body had not been recovered reference Evening Post newspaper 03 April 1914 page 8
- #Daniel DENNEHY plumber Main Road (7288) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll
- #Daniel DENNEHY died 1947 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1947 folio website 1947/19020 age 66 born about 1881
5. Percival Thomas EDWARDS (labourer residing Upper Hutt who purchased gelignite) born 1876 New Zealand died 1963 New Zealand married 1899 New Zealand Rose Ethel Stevenson COLLIE born about 1880 died 1968 New Zealand
- #Sales of Gelignite – What sales of gelignite do you know of since 6<sup>th</sup> February – I know of two to Edwards. When were the two sales affected – I couldn't say. Could you give us an

idea – Well I believe one was on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, I don't know the date of the other. How much on 14<sup>th</sup> March 5lb. By whom to whom – By Vivian I believe to P T Edwards a labourer Upper Hutt. What information have you about that sale – I have Mr Edwards here. How did you get the information – From Mr Edwards through an advertisement put in the local paper on Saturday night. When did he speak to you about it – Yesterday. Was that the first you knew of it – Yes sir reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 21 April 1914 page 6

#Thomas Percival EDWARDS Settler Mungaroa Road Trentham (1888) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll

#Percival Thomas EDWARDS born 1876 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1876 folio website 1876/12630 parents Philadelphia and Thomas Edwards

#Percival Thomas EDWARDS married 1899 New Zealand Rose Ethel Stevenson COLLIE reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1899 folio website 1899/1978

#Percival Thomas EDWARDS died 1963 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1963 folio website 1963/34246 age 86 born about 1877

6. William Henry EDWARDS (W H Edwards & Co Carrier business Office Provincial Stables) born about 1878 died 1936 New Zealand

#Mr James Comesky the postmaster with a laudable zeal to save Government property had gone into the little office of Mr Edwards the carrier at the corner of Benge and Pratt's building and was trying to pull off the telephone (number 20) and get it away reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Mr Pratt proceeded to the rear of the building and along with others, secured a garden hose and endeavoured to stop the flames spreading to Edwards's stables and the outhouses of Mr Hazelwood reference National Library of NZ Papers past website 30 March 1914 age 6

#It stands immediately south of Messrs Benge and Pratt's site and was separated from the establishment of that firm only by a small wooden building occupied by Mr H Edwards (carrier) as an office reference National Library of NZ Papers past website 30 March 1914 age 6

#William Henry EDWARDS carter Upper Hutt (1889) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#William Henry EDWARDS born 1878 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1878 folio website 1878/16655 parents Philedelphia and Thomas Edwards

#William Henry EDWARDS died 1936 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1936 folio website 1936/24325 age 58 born about 1878

7. Walter GALES (hotel porter)

#Michael Toohey who had been engaged at the time of the explosion in playing the hose on the store from the veranda of the hotel was discovered lying on the veranda by the hotel porter Walter Gales frightfully cut with the debris to which he had been exposed reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Walter Gales the hotel porter discovered him laying on the veranda in a pool of blood reference National Library of NZ Papers past website NZ Truth newspaper 04 April 1914 page 5

NOT SURE #Walter Allen Freeman GALE died 1941 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1941 folio website 1941/28171 age 75 born about 1866

8. William George GOSS (Town board turncock) born about 1864 died 1949 New Zealand perhaps married 1886 New Zealand Eliza Louisa HULBERT and/or 1898 Elizabeth Sarah COLLETT

#A half inch garden hose was got to work on the hotel and a messenger was sent to W G Goss the Town board turncock to bring along the fire extinguishing appliances which was kept in the town board office reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 11 April 1914 page 2

#William George GOSS coal merchant Russell Street Upper Hutt (2405) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll

#William George GOSS married 1886 New Zealand Eliza Louisa HULBERT reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1886 folio website 1886/2851 and/or

- #William George GOSS married 1898 New Zealand Elizabeth Sarah COLLETT reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1898 folio website 1898/1528  
#William George GOSS died 1949 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1949 folio website 1949/22600 age 85 born about 1864
9. James Percival HALL (locomotive NZ Railways at Upper Hutt) born 20 March 1887 New Zealand died 1972 New Zealand married 1915 New Zealand Eleanor Eugene SMOOTHY born 20 March 1889 died 1982 New Zealand  
#James Percival Hall employed in the locomotive department of the New Zealand Railways at Upper Hutt said he was in the bake house at the rear of Bengie and Pratt's when he heard the explosion reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 08 April 1914 page 8  
#James Percival Hall fireman NZR C/- Mrs Healy 94 Fergusson Street West (8259) 1914 Palmerston Electoral Roll Manawatu Wanganui reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#James Percival HALL born 1888 New Zealand reference RGO NZ 1888 folio website 1888/6832 parents Catherine and Henry William Hall  
#James Percival HALL married 1915 New Zealand Eleanor Eugene SMOOTHY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1915 folio website 1915/9631  
#James Percival HALL died 1972 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1972 folio website 1972/32256 born 20 March 1887
10. Samuel HILL (Government Valuer boarder at Hotel)  
#Mr Morison first called Mr Samuel Hill JP Upper Hutt Government Valuer who said that he was about 3 feet off the hotel main entrance when the explosion occurred. He measured the distance from where he stood to the spot he estimated as the centre of the explosion which was somewhere in the vicinity of the chimney of the grocery department. When the debris fell after the explosion a veranda post came down within two feet of where he stood reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 24 April 1914 page 8  
#Samuel Hill Valuer 107 Cuba Street (7487) 1914 Wellington Central Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
NOT SURE#Samuel HILL age 35 born about 1897 occupation Brewery Employee died buried 26 January 1932 Karori cemetery Wellington section Soldiers plot 3 Q record number 89225 reference Wellington City Council website Karori cemetery database  
NOT SURE #Samuel HILL died 1932 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1932 folio website 1932/5493 age 35 born about 1897
11. Merton Littlejohn HORTON / HORTOR (paymaster Maymorn Estate Co) born about 1890 England died 20 August 1947 Dunedin New Zealand  
#Merton Horton paymaster Maymorn Estate Co said that he was two miles away when the explosion occurred. He heard it distinctly and it sounded like a high explosion reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Newspaper 09 April 1914 page 5  
#Merton Littlejohn Horton accountant 23 Alfred Street St Kilda (10121) 1919 Dunedin South Electoral Roll Otago reference Ancestry New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Merton Littlejohn HORTOR [sic] died 1947 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1947 folio website 1947/29522 age 57 born about 1890
12. William Joseph Pyrtle HOWE born 1888 New Zealand died 1956 New Zealand married 1909 New Zealand Jane Elizabeth EDWARDS born about 1886 died 1955 New Zealand  
#Where the men were - Ernest Charles Thomas sawmiller Station street Upper Hutt, the first witness, briefly related how he went into Messrs Edwards office with Constable Mahoney and Messrs Howe and Twohill and recovered the property reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 03 April 1914 page 8  
#William Joseph Pyrtle Howe carter Queen Street Upper Hutt (3070) & Jane Elizabeth Howe married Queen Street Upper Hutt (3065) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#William Joseph Purtell HOWE born 1888 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1888 folio website 1888/2089 parents Mary Jane and David Barrett Howe  
#William Joseph Pyrtle HOWE married 1909 New Zealand Jane Elizabeth EDWARDS reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1909 folio website 1909/3600

- #William Joseph Pyrtle HOWE died 1956 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1956 folio website 1956/28357 age 68 born about 1888
13. Andrew HUNTER (Boot maker Upper Hutt) married 1896 New Zealand Amy EDSER born about 1873 died 1949 Wellington New Zealand  
#Andrew Hunter boot maker Upper Hutt said that he joined Constable Mahoney when the latter was first called to the fire. They went down the South side of the building towards the stable and when they were passing the storeroom he noticed a reflection in the building. The fire appeared to be confined to the lower part of the store at the back of the grocery department reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post Newspaper 04 April 1914 page 9  
#Andrew HUNTER married 1896 New Zealand Amy EDSER reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1896 folio website 1896/2574  
#Andrew Hunter Bookmaker Station Road Upper Hutt (3106) & Amy Hunter married Station Road Upper Hutt (3105) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls (also both on 1938 Wellington North Electoral Roll at 297 Cuba Street then 1946 Brooklyn Electoral Roll at 26 Torrens Terrace) (Andrew was still on an Electoral roll in 1954)  
#Amy HUNTER died 1949 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1949 folio website 1949/26150 age 76 born about 1873 buried 23 September 1949 Karori cemetery Wellington section Roman Catholic 2 plot 99 B record number 55762  
NOT SURE #Andrew HUNTER died 1963 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1963 folio website 1963/42110 age 85 born about 1878
14. Doctor Frederick William KEMP born about 1880 died 1962 New Zealand married 1909 New Zealand Julia Caroline BURTON born about 1882 died (first doctor on scene later joined by Dr Fred Thompson BOWERBANK & Dr James Robert PURDIE & DR Charles Munroe HECTOR)  
#The injured man was conveyed to the adjoining billiard saloon and there received first aid from Dr Kemp of Upper Hutt who had come at the sound of the explosion and did splendid work in tending to the injuries of the badly hurt. He was assisted later by Dr Bowerbank and Drs Purdie and Hector who were summoned by telephone as soon as possible. The injuries to the postmaster proved fatal. He died before the special train left for town reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7  
#Frederick William KEMP doctor of medicine Upper Hutt (3438) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Frederick William KEMP doctor of medicine Upper Hutt (4378) & Julia Caroline KEMP married Upper Hutt (4379) 1919 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#Frederick William KEMP married 1909 New Zealand Julia Caroline BURTON reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1909 folio website 1909/3491  
#Julia Caroline KEMP died 14 May 1954 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1954 folio website 1954/22576 age 72 born about 1882  
#Frederick William KEMP died 1962 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1962 folio website 1962/25277 age 82 born about 1880  
#THREE DOCTORS who assisted  
#[1]Fred Thompson BOWERBANK medical practitioner 17 Revans Street (624) & Maud Bowerbank married 17 Revans Street (625) 1914 Wellington East Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#[2]James Robert PURDY medical practitioner Oulton House Hutt (5114) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
#[3]Charles Munroe HECTOR medical practitioner Waterloo Road Hutt (2803) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls  
DOCTORS
15. George Laban LAY (photographer Upper Hutt) born about 1857 died 1937 New Zealand married Lucy Surname unknown born about 1864 died 1945 New Zealand  
#Whilst little impression could be made on the fire with the restricted means available, the band of workers in the shop shifted a good deal of the stock out on to the road and into Mr Lay's shop opposite and were still slaving like Trojans to save goods from the \_maw [sic] of

the flames reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6

#George Lay JP photographer Upper Hutt submitted a photo of the ruins taken about 5.30 am on the Sunday after the explosion. Prior to the explosion he said he was working in the grocery and in the drapery department of the store. He was in the drapery department when the explosion occurred. The explosion was quite half an hour after the fire started. He could not say how he got out of the ruins after the explosion. When he recovered from the shock the grocery department was shattered. All the upper portion of the walls of the south east corner were down and Edwards's office was lying on the ground. The walls of the drapery department were not intact but they were standing. Directly after the explosion everything burst into flames reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 09 April 1914 page 5

#In the shop were, so far as can be ascertained, R F Storey, Alan Anderson, George Taylor, William Flynn, Herbert Weaver, A G Collett, Thomas Costello, G H Lay, Everary Polling, Vigil M'Govern, Charles Walters, Norman Williams, John Wesley Vivian and Constable Mahoney reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#G L Lay Photographer Upper Hutt reference National Library of NZ papers past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 07 March 1914 page 2

#George Laban LAY storekeeper Upper Hutt (3605) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Roll

#George Laban died 1937 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1937 folio website 1937/23991 age 80 born about 1857

16. Robert George MABEY (carter Upper Hutt & brother in law of Mr Benges cousin) born 1875 New Zealand died 1948 New Zealand married 1899 Ada Philadelphia EDWARDS born 18 December 1880 died 1972 New Zealand

#With them were Mr RG Mabie and others. Mr James Comesky the postmaster with a laudable zeal to save Government property had gone into the little office of Mr Edwards the carrier at the corner of Benges and Pratt's building and was trying to pull off the telephone and get it away reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7

#Robert George Mabey coal merchant Upper Hutt (3838) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

#Robert George MABEY born 1875 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1875 folio website 1975/8030 parents Mary and Robert Thomas Mabey

#Robert George MABEY married 1899 New Zealand Ada Philadelphia EDWARDS reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1899 folio website 1899/608

#Robert George MABEY died 1948 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1948 folio website 1948/21374 age 74 born about 1874

17. Constable John MELVILLE (stationed in Wellington after fire on duty at the Upper Hutt station)

#Constable John Melville on duty at Upper Hutt gave evidence as to the finding of Constable Mahoney's body. He was present when the handcuffs were found. He knew Constable Mahoney to have been in possession of the handcuffs discovered reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 04 April 1914 page 3

#Some time later he saw Constable Melville find some handcuffs. This was between 5 and 6 o'clock. The handcuffs were found directly underneath the spot where the remains had been picked up. Constable John Melville stationed at Wellington but now on duty at the Upper Hutt deposed to arriving at the Upper Hutt at 6 am on Sunday 29th March. He saw a pair of handcuffs found at the spot where the remains were picked up. They were exactly the same make as the handcuffs Constable Mahoney carried reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 03 April 1914 page 8

#John Melville constable Police Station Lambton Quay (4043) 1914 Wellington North Electoral Roll & 1919 Wellington North Electoral roll (5868) reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

18. Thomas Martin MILLIGAN born about 1877 died 1947 New Zealand married 1907 New Zealand Maria CHURCHER



- #This was locked up and when Mr WG Goss Town Board water inspector, came to get it he had to break open the gate with his helpers, including Messrs A Hunter and Smith of the Government Laboratory, Benge, Milligan and others reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7
- #Town Board's Relief List – The Upper Hutt Town Board reports the following donations towards the disaster relief fund (various people and businesses) T M Milligan 10s [perhaps this is the man mentioned above] reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 27 April 1914 page 6
- #Thomas Martin MILLIGAN labourer Heretaunga (4290) & Mary Annie MILLIGAN married Heretaunga (4292) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #Thomas Martin MILLIGAN married 1907 New Zealand Maria CHURCHER reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1907 folio website 1907/6435
- #Thomas Martin MILLIGAN died 1947 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1947 folio website 1947/21501 age 70 born about 1877
19. Owen Edward PHILLIPS (platelayer on the railway residing Upper Hutt) born about 1881 New Zealand died 1945 New Zealand married perhaps 1912 New Zealand Alice Beatrice MARTIN and /or married 1918 New Zealand Theresa Lily May O'REILLY
- #Finding Constable Mahoney - Daniel Dennehey a plumber and a brother-in-law of the late Constable Mahoney said that he arrived at the scene at 4 am on Sunday morning. He was then informed that Constable Mahoney's body had not been recovered. With others he walked round the ruins and about an hour later saw a Mr Phillips remove some sheets of iron directly opposite where the main door of the shop had been and about three steps in from the building edge of the footpath. Witness then saw the remains of a body which were examined by Dr Bowerbank and removed to the courthouse. Witness returned to the fire and requested those hear not to touch anything near the spot. Later a man with a shovel found a pair of handcuffs in the exact spot where the remains had been lying. Constable John Melville on duty at Upper Hutt gave evidence as to the finding of Constable Mahoney's body. He was present when the handcuffs were found. He knew Constable Mahoney to have been in possession of the handcuffs discovered reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion newspaper 04 April 1914 page 3
- #Owen Edward Phillips platelayer Upper Hutt said he came on the scene after the explosion. He was at Wallaceville when the noise came like the loud report of a gun a very sharp report and a rumble after. The two noises were distinct and separate. Witness gave evidence of finding the deceased Flynn reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 04 April 1914 page 9
- #Owen Edward Phillips railway employee Martin Street Upper Hutt (8129) & Alice Phillips married Martin Street Upper Hutt (8125) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #Owen Edward PHILLIPS married 1912 New Zealand Alice Beatrice MARTIN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1912 folio website 1912/1033 and/or
- #Owen Edward PHILLIPS married 1918 New Zealand Theresa Lily May O'REILLY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1918 folio website 1918/8
- #Owen Edward PHILLIPS died 1945 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1945 folio website 1945/26680 age 64 born about 1881
20. Mr F SMITH (Government Laboratory) perhaps Forbes Smith
- #This was locked up and when Mr WG Goss Town Board water inspector, came to get it he had to break open the gate with his helpers, including Messrs A Hunter and Smith of the Government Laboratory, Benge, Milligan and others reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7
- #Government Veterinary Laboratory – Laboratory Assistant - F Smith reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 09 May 1914 page 1 plus various other publication dates
- NOT SURE#Forbes SMITH Electrical engineer Kiwi Street Hutt (5739) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #Forbes SMITH died 1941 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1941 folio website 1941/27896 age 64 born about 1877

- #Forbes SMITH died buried 30 October 1941 Karori cemetery Wellington section Public 3 plot 320 F occupation Electrical Engineer age 64 born about 1877 record number 33235 Wellington City Council website Karori cemetery database & headstone In loving memory of Forbes SMITH beloved husband of Margaret C SMITH died 29 October 1941 age 64 also Margaret beloved wife of the above died 31 May 1962 age 83 Also their sons Richard died March 1980 Forbes died July 1980
21. Percy Victor STOTT (standing nearby when explosion occurred) born about 1891 died 1958 New Zealand married 1915 New Zealand Annie Isabel MINCHIN born about 1894 died 1941 New Zealand
- #When the explosion occurred several men (Messrs E C Thomas, P Stott, W Wilkinson and Collett) were standing at or very near Messrs Benge and Pratt Shop door reference National Library of NZ papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6
- #Percy Victor Stott machinist Russell Street Upper Hutt (8395) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #Percy Victor STOTT born 1891 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1891 folio website 1891/4000 parents Mary and John Stott
- #Percy Victor STOTT married 1915 New Zealand Annie Isabel MINCHIN reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1915 folio website 1915/4952
- #Percy Victor STOTT died 1958 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1958 folio website 1958/25798 age 67 born about 1891
22. Ernest Charles THOMAS (saw-miller Station Street Upper Hutt)
- #Another man named Thomas was blown right across the street and was unscathed reference National Library of NZ Papers past web site Wairarapa Daily Times newspaper 30 March 1914 page 5
- #There is yet the grave possibility of the list of fatally injured being added to [1] Herbert Collett [2] Herbert Weaver [3] T Thomas [4] E Crabtree reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6
- #When the explosion occurred several men (Messrs E C Thomas, P Stott, W Wilkinson and Collett) were standing at or very near Messrs Benge and Pratt Shop door reference National Library of NZ papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6
- #When the explosion occurred several men (Messrs E C Thomas, P Stott, W Wilkinson and Collett) were standing at or very near Messrs Benge and Pratt Shop door. They were dazed and it was minutes before they realised what had happened. Mt Thomas was struck in the back by a bit of iron or something of the kind. He has only a vague notion of his progress across the street. I simply flew he declared reference National Library of NZ papers past website Otago Dailey Times newspaper 01 April 1914 page 6
- #Ernest Charles Thomas sawmiller Station Street Upper Hutt the first witness briefly related how he went into Messrs Edwards office with Constable Mahoney and Messrs Howe and Twohill and recovered the property reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 03 April 1914 page 8
- #Messrs Thomas, Wilkinson and others standing close in front of the building were lifted nearly across the street with the force of the explosion reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7
- #Ernest Charles Thomas sawyer Hauters Cross Te Horo (6495) 1914 Otaki Electoral Roll reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
23. James Grace TWOHILL (engine driver) born about 1878 died 1946 New Zealand married Marion surname unknown born about 1885 died 1968 New Zealand
- #James Toohill who was in full view of the building and retained all his faculties was able to give a connected account of the explosion. During the progress of the fire he heard a small booming sound followed by a louder one and immediately after the latter a terrific outburst. The roof was lifted off and pieces of wood and sparks were thrown high into the air. He heard several minor explosions like detonators reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Northern Advocate newspaper 08 April 1914 page 7
- #James Grace Twohill engine man Princess Street Upper Hutt (6216) & Marion Twohill married Princess Street Upper Hutt (6217) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls

- #James Grace TWOHILL died 1946 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1946 folio website 1946/25813 age 68 born about 1878
24. William WILKINSON (standing nearby when explosion occurred) born about 1885 died 1936 Masterton New Zealand married Isabella Surname Unknown born about 1884 died 1965 Masterton New Zealand
- #When the explosion occurred several men (Messrs E C Thomas, P Stott, W Wilkinson and Collett) were standing at or very near Messrs Benge and Pratt Shop door reference National Library of NZ papers past website Dominion Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 6
- #William WILKINSON storekeeper Main Street Upper Hutt (6601) & Isabella WILKINSON married Upper Hutt (6595) 1914 Hutt Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #William WILKINSON died 1936 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1936 folio website 1936/14453 age 51 born about 1885
- #Isabella WILKINSON died 1965 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1965 folio website 1965/30151 age 81 born about 1884
25. Norman Randolph WILLIAMS (blown out of the shop when explosion took place) born 1881 New Zealand died 1921 New Zealand married 1913 New Zealand Mary Catherine MURPHY
- #In the shop were so far as can be ascertained (various names and) Norman Williams reference National Library of NZ papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7
- #T Croft and Norman Williams were blown right out of the shop but without serious injury reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7
- #Norman Randolph Williams farmer Akatarawa (5140) & May Williams married Akatarawa (5139) 1914 Otaki Electoral Roll Wellington reference Ancestry website New Zealand Electoral Rolls
- #Norman Randolph WILLIAMS born 1881 New Zealand reference RGO NZ birth registration 1881 folio website 1881/18766 parents Marion and John Williams
- #Norman Randolph WILLIAMS married 1913 New Zealand Mary Catherine MURPHY reference RGO NZ marriage registration 1913 folio website 1913/4298
- #Norman Randolph WILLIAMS died 1921 New Zealand reference RGO NZ death registration 1921 folio website 1921/5064 age 40 born about 1881
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## NEWSPAPER ARTICLES COVERING INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIRE

(Pages 34 to 45)

Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 - Story of the fire from the first alarm

**No danger anticipated then the fatal explosion** - The origin both of the fire and of the subsequent explosion is enveloped in complete mystery at the present. Messrs Benge and Pratt the proprietors of the store, left the premises on Saturday night about half past nine after making the usual tour of inspection. About half-past eleven Mrs Crabtree wife of the landlord of the Provincial Hotel, which is situated on the section adjacent to that on which the store stood, observed smoke percolating through the roof of the store. She at once gave the alarm and Constable Denis Mahoney the local police officer was at once summoned. He came and saw the position and went away with Mr RG Mabie, who had just arrived from town by the late train, to knock up the proprietors Messrs Benge and Pratt. When the party returned they found that a number of other residents had arrived on the scene, including a dozen railway men or so, who had come down from the station.

**Getting out the stock** - There does not appear to have been instant recourse to the fire hose and the use of the high pressure water supply with which the township has lately been equipped. There is no fire brigade in the Upper Hutt and all that was available in the way of firefighting apparatus was a hydrant and a hose 150 feet long, belonging to the Town Board. This was locked up and when Mr WG Goss Town Board water inspector, came to get it he had to break open the gate with his helpers, including Messrs A Hunter and Smith of the Government Laboratory, Benge, Milligan and others. This all took time and in the meanwhile the fire was gathering strength. Constable Mahoney organised the spectators into a band of helpers, to rescue the stock. About thirty were now on the spot and all joined in the good work. The books were all saved and a quantity of the stock. There was absolutely no indication of any extraordinary danger. The fire appears to have been at this above and at the back of the shop part of the building. It was like any other fire where property has to be saved.

**At Midnight** - It was then midnight and the fire was making headway. Fortunately for later developments it was a calm, warm night, with no wind to fan the flames. So far only those living in the immediate vicinity and those whose duties, as at the railway station, kept them up at so late an hour were about the place, with numbers gradually but slowly increasing. Had it been the previous night when there were crowds at the picture show in town the subsequent calamity might have been far worse, for there would then have been a throng of sightseers in front of the burning building and in line with the flying debris of the explosion, which wrought such havoc. The hose had not yet arrived, but the flames now licking about the roof to the rear of the old store a low building with a gable upper story began to threaten the Provincial Hotel alongside. The proprietor Mr Crabtree was up on the veranda overlooking the fire with Mr M Toohey who was playing a small garden hose on the roof of the burning building. The boarders in the hotel were up and preparing to get out with their belongings. Mr Samuel Hill Government Valuer, was gathering his plans and papers from a parlour on the ground floor overlooking the alleyway between the store and the hotel. A small party of helpers was getting out Mr Crabtree's motor car and managed to drive it through into the street and out of the way. It is said another car was also run through the gauntlet of the alleyway just in time.

**Where the men were** - Mr Herbert Benge after assisting the volunteers with the removal of his safe from the back of the store, out into the street, had returned again, and was with his partner, Mr Herbert Pratt at the back of the store again shifting stuff out of the bake house. Mr Pratt with a garden hose, was endeavouring to prevent the spread of the fire, which was now well going in the centre and rear of the building from spreading to the premises of Mr Hazelwood next door, and Mr Edwards's stables. With them were Mr RG Mabie and others. James Comesky the postmaster with a laudable zeal to save Government property, had gone into the little office of Mr Edwards the carrier, at the corner of Benge and Pratt's building, and was trying to pull off the telephone and get it away. Constable Mahoney with the volunteer band, had got the books out of Edwards's, and were in the shop working hard to save everything that could be saved in time, for the hose was not yet ready. The fire had crept up from the back and was now going strong up above in the upper story. In the shop were so far as can be ascertained, RF Storey, Alan Anderson, George Taylor, William Flynn, Herbert

Weaver, A. G. Collett, Thomas Costello, GH Lay, Everary [sic] Pelling, Vigil McGovern, Charles Walters, Norman Williams, John Wesley Vivian, and Constable Mahoney. They were moving quickly about picking up goods and carrying them out or handing them to others. There was a constant stream of the workers moving in and out of the building. Where each one exactly was when the explosion took place is almost impossible to say as most of them suffered so much by the shock that their recollection is far from clear of the actual occurrence. At all events there were about thirty people shortly after midnight actively engaged in salvage operations and others look on further away.

*(Reference National Library of New Zealand Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7)*

Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914

**The Unfortunate Men - Biographical Sketches** - The tragedy has removed from Upper Hutt one of the best known figures in the community in Constable Dennis Mahoney. He was an attendant at all public function in the township during the last nine years, and he was universally liked. He was born in Ireland thirty eight years ago and on coming out to New Zealand he engaged in mining at Waihi and Karangahake. Fifteen years ago he joined the Police Force. He was a fine stamp of man and a noted athlete. He was an adept wrestler and a heavyweight lifter, he was first stationed at Lambton quay and later was transferred to Woodville. In 1905 he was placed in charge at Upper Hutt. The late constable who was well known throughout the Dominion, has left a wife and three young children.

Walter George Taylor was only 19 years of age and resided with his parents at Upper Hutt. He joined the Railway Department two years ago and was making good progress.

William D Flynn was stationed at Upper Hutt. For the last seven years he had been engaged on trains in the Lambton Upper Hutt service and was well known by constant suburban travellers. He was married and leaves a wife and five step sons. He was born at Dunedin thirty-seven years ago.

John W Vivian a grocer's assistant was also a native of Dunedin. He was 35 years of age and for some time he was in business for himself at Lower Hutt.

Mr Michael Toohey was born in Tasmania about fifty-five years ago and was employed in sawmills in that country before he came to New Zealand. He was a fine axe man and was in the employ of the Maymorn Estate Company for some time.

Mr James Comesky was 55 years of age and joined the Post and Telegraph Department as a telegraphist in Auckland two days before Christmas 1881. Prior to that date he served twelve years in the Postal Service of the United Kingdom. In 1901 he was appointed Postmaster at Ohaeawai Bay of Island and in 1909 he became postmaster at Upper Hutt. Mr Comesky who was a valued officer of the Department was a well-known bowler. He has left a widow and several children, most of whom are grown up.

**Injured Men in Hospital** - A report from the Hospital today states that Pelling who was injured about the head, is in a serious condition. He is still unconscious. Hagan who sustained severe scalp wounds is a little easier. There has been a decided improvement in McGovern's condition since yesterday. He was cut about the head, legs and arms and several pieces of glass which had become embedded in his flesh have been removed.

*(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914 page 7)*

Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914

**Six lives lost tragic fire at Upper Hutt** - Explosion in a burning store, scatters death among band of helpers postmaster and constable among the dead. Two railwaymen killed and several wounded. Origin of explosion a mystery. Shortly after midnight on Saturday at the township of Upper Hutt a tragic calamity occurred. A small store was discovered to be on fire just before midnight and in the interval before the fire hose could be secured a band of helpers, including many local residents and railwaymen, entered the burning building and endeavoured to save as much of the stock as possible. While they were thus engaged inside and just outside the store a terrific explosion occurred inside and completely wrecked the whole premises. Four men were killed outright, one died soon afterwards and a sixth man succumbed to his injuries shortly after reaching Wellington Hospital early on Sunday morning. Several others were more or less severely Injured with the flying debris and burning timber and after being attended by a number of doctors, who hurriedly summoned, were quickly on the scene, were conveyed by special train in record time to Wellington, where they were

received in the Hospital. The less seriously injured had their injuries tended and were able to get back to their homes. Many people had miraculous escapes in the fatal rain of flying debris, which spread havoc among all the surrounding property. The windows in adjoining buildings, the Provincial Hotel and in the Post Office across the main road and in dwelling houses and shops much further away were shattered to fragments by the force of the explosion. After the explosion the fire consumed the wreckage and assailed and gutted the next building a drapery store. It was finally suppressed, early in the morning after the worst was done, by a party of fire fighters with one lead of hose.

**The six men who met their deaths through the explosion were:**

- Constable Denis Mahoney aged about 38 years in charge of the Upper Hutt Police Station.
- James Comesky 57 years of age Postmaster at Upper Hutt.
- William Flynn aged 35 years railway guard.
- George Taylor 19 years of age railway porter at Upper Hutt.
- John Wesley Vivian aged about 35 years storeman in Benges's store
- Michael Toohey aged about 29 years bridge contractor.

**Seriously injured** - The following were seriously injured and are at present in Wellington Hospital

- James Hagan about 50 years of age caretaker of Trentham Rifle Range.
- Everard E H Felling [sic] 18 years of age blacksmith's assistant.
- Virgil M'Govern about 25 years of age a member of the Upper Hutt Town Board.

Many others were less seriously injured including the following:

- Charles Walters signalman at the Upper Hutt
- Thomas Costello shunter at Upper Hutt
- R F Storey tablet porter at Upper Hutt
- S H Weaver engine driver and chairman of the local branch of the Locomotive Engine drivers and Firemen's Association
- A J Collett local chairman of Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
- C D Morpeth Accountant Wellington

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**Narrow Escapes after the Explosion** – The affected area - At the time of the explosion there were at least a score of men engaged in and about the shop in the salvage operations. Probably actually inside the store there were at least eight men. Under the circumstances, therefore, it is simply marvellous that so many escaped. This is probably due to the peculiar nature of the explosion, which appears to have swept the ground over a certain area at a certain elevation and left the rest almost unscathed. Those at the north end of the shop, in the drapery department were nearly all uninjured. The explosion took effect more in a south easterly direction from the southern portion of the shop. It is believed that the youth Taylor, who was killed outright, was engaged at the time in saving goods through the broken shop window and got the explosion full through the confined space. Not far away was Mr C D Morpeth who was badly cut about the neck and head. Mr T Costello a railway shunter who was also close to Taylor was severely cut about the legs and sides. Everard Pelling who lies in a critical condition in the Wellington Hospital with a fractured skull was picked up near the late Mr Comesky in the ruins of Edwards's office. Virgil M'Govern was found nearly sixty feet away from the doorway of the building in which the explosion took place and probably received his injuries from flying debris at that distance. It is not at present known where Mr Hagan was found. Among those who had close calls was Mr R F Storey relieving tablet porter at Upper Hutt, who was in the shop with the late Constable Mahoney, John Vivian and others. He was blown through the door into the street. His injuries were confined to cuts on the neck and burns on the hand. At the time of the explosion he was bending down over a case and to this he attributes his life. Also inside the shop was Signalman Walters, who was knocked down by the force of the explosion and in falling drove Alan Anderson another signalman right through the door. The stationmaster Mr Kemp was quite close to the unfortunate Vivian at the time of the explosion, but got off without a scratch. T Croft and Norman Williams were blown right out of the shop, but without serious injury. Messrs Thomas, Wilkinson, and others standing close in front of the building, were lifted nearly across

the street with the force of the explosion. The landlord of the hotel Mr E Crabtree had a marvellous experience. He was mounting a ladder to the balcony when the explosion came which killed Toohy. Mr Crabtree was blown to the ground and stunned, but escaped further injury. The ladder was smashed to fragments. Messrs Collett and Weaver both prominent railway men, were injured about the legs and will be unable to get about for some time. Mr J Toohill engine driver, was another of those lucky enough to escape from the worst. He was detained by his wife at the moment of the explosion from going again into the shop.

**Putting out the Fire** - It was not till after the explosion took place that the hose was coupled up to the main and water played with any force on the flames. As explained the fire inspector (Mr Gosse) had been unable to gain access to the Town Board building where the fire appliances were kept, so he sent his son to obtain the key to the back entrance from Roadman Greenwood. He was however, according to report, unable to open the door as a duplicate key had been left in the entrance. The door was therefore forced and appliances obtained. The water was turned on the hotel which was saved. Then Hazelwood's building which is of brick, ignited by falling debris received the attention of the fire fighters. The operations were under the direction of George Mansell, a former employee of Jenkins and Mack, who held the nozzle. Among the helpers with the hose were Messrs Smith, Hooper, Phillips, and others. Though Hazelwood's shop was gutted the fire was checked from further progress.

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**The Hutt Tragedy** - In connection with the tragic fire at Upper Hutt on Saturday night Mr Pratt, who received a cut on the temple in the explosion, was seen by the reporter at his residence. Naturally he is completely prostrated by the catastrophe and is confined to his bed. He was asked if he could advance any theory as to the cause and whether there were any explosives on the premises. There might have been a pound or two of blasting powder in the bottom of one of the kegs, he said, but he did not think there was more. There were two or three empty kegs which had contained blasting powder. His firm could not stock much of the explosive, as it was only kept for the convenience of customers who wanted to blast tree stumps. The powder was kept upstairs in a store room where raisins, currants, mechanical toys, and other goods were stocked. He was absolutely at a loss to account for the origin of the explosion. Any little blasting powder there might have been in stock would be rough powder, as rack-a-rock and other patent explosives were not stocked. The firm had occupied the premises for four years and he thought it was extremely unlikely that any explosives had been left, there by the previous occupiers.

**The Injured Men** - Mr James Hagan one of the three men now in Wellington Hospital, is about 52 years of age and is on the Defence Department staff. He has lived in the Hutt Valley for a considerable period and since 1906 has been caretaker of the Trentham Rifle Range. He is a member of the local School Committee. His wife was caterer for the men who took part in the recent Dominion rifle meeting. There is a large family, some members of which have refreshment rooms at the Upper Hutt. Mr Virgil McGovern also in the Hospital is a son of the late Mr Francis McGovern, who kept hotels at Kaiw-ira, Taita and Trentham at different times. He is a single man about 35 years of age and very popular in the Upper Hutt district. His mother and sister live in the district. He completed his education at St Patrick's College. On Wednesday last he was elected a member of the Upper Hutt Town Board in succession to Mr N J Bennington, resigned. His recovery is only regarded as a matter of time. Everard Edward Henry Pelling, whose condition is serious and who was removed to the Hospital soon after he met with his injuries, is eighteen years of age and a son of Mr Edward Pelling well known in Rugby football circles in past years. He is a blacksmith by trade and an enthusiastic footballer. It is feared that he has sustained a fracture of the base of the skull. Mr Thomas Costello, whose side and one of his legs are injured, is a married man and has been employed for the past three months as a shunter at the Upper Hutt railway station. He is under treatment at his own home. Mr Herbert Collett, chairman of the- Upper Hutt branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, one of whose legs is hurt he also sustained a scalp wound, is lying at his own home. He has been in the railway service for many years. Another railway servant who is hurt is Mr Herbert Weaver. He is suffering from shock and

also from injuries to his legs. Mr C D Morpeth who was cut about the head, was well enough to be driven from his residence today to have his injuries attended to.

**The Insurances** - The insurances on the principal buildings destroyed or seriously damaged in the appalling calamity at Upper Hutt on Saturday night are as follows - Messrs Benge and Pratt's building (owned by Mr W J Wilkie of Upper Hutt) was insured in the Commercial Union office for £275. The stock was insured for £1800 in the Guardian office. Mr Benge estimates the value of the stock at £2800. Mr Hazelwood's drapery store totally destroyed, owned by Messrs Hazelwood and Co. was insured in the Alliance office for £900 and the stock and furniture for £1800 in the Alliance. The Provincial Hotel was damaged, chiefly by the force of the explosion, windows being smashed and the contents of rooms broken. The building is owned by Messrs Staples and Co., and insured with the Atlas office for £2700 and the outbuildings in the same office for £530. The stock and furniture owned by the licensee are insured in the Liverpool London and Globe office for £1000. The amount of damage which is considerable has not been estimated.

**The Funerals** - The funerals of the late Messrs James Comesky, Dennis Mahoney, William Flynn and Michael Toohey will leave the Courthouse Upper Hutt to-morrow morning at 10.15 o'clock for St Joseph's, where High Mass will be celebrated. The funeral of the late Mr W G Taylor will leave his father's residence Main road Upper Hutt at 2.45 pm tomorrow for the Wallaceville churchyard. All the police available will attend the funeral of Constable Mahoney and there promises to be a very large muster. Arrangements are in hand to make the funerals of a public nature. Mr TM Wilford MP for Upper Hutt, who was early on the scene, considers that prompt steps should be taken to assist the widows and children, and he has sent a telegram as follows to the Prime Minister "Trust that you will urge Cabinet to assist the widows and children of those who have lost their lives in trying to assist others and in carrying out a public duty.

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#### Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 11 April 1914

Fire & Fatal Explosion - Seven killed, many injured and numerous marvellous escapes.

[1] James Comeskey [2] William D Flynn [3] Denis Mahoney

[4] Everard E H Pelling [5] George W Taylor [6] Michael Toohey, John W Vivian

A fire only exceeded in the attendant loss of life on one other occasion in the history of the Dominion, broke out at the store of Benge and Pratt Upper Hutt, late on Saturday night, March 28, and an explosion of considerable violence occurred which wrecked the building, caused the death of seven most popular residents and injured a number of others. Just after half past eleven on Saturday night an inmate of the Provincial Hotel who was waiting up for an arrival by the last train, noticed smoke issuing from the store which is on the eastern side of the adjoining right of way and some 30ft distant. Constable Mahoney was apprised of the outbreak of fire and he roused some of those living in the neighbourhood and secured the attendance of one of the partners H L Pratt, who had a key of the burning building. Messrs Pratt, Mahoney and A Hunter then entered the premises through the front door at about 11.38 pm and rolled the safe out, end over end and across to the south side of the road. A half inch garden hose was got to work on the hotel and a messenger was sent to W G Goss the town board turncock, to bring along the fire extinguishing appliances which were kept in the town board office. Meanwhile the fire which appeared to be in the upper portion of the building, spread and the flames illuminated the vicinity. On the arrival of the first of the two late trains, a number of passengers and railway employees took a hand in the work of salvage. The fire gained in volume and by five minutes to midnight had illuminated the valley with such brilliancy that the time of a watch could be read a mile distant from the fire. Salvage work proceeded with vigour in front and rear and the side wall of the hotel was kept from burning by E Crabtree and M Toohey with the garden hose and so matters went on until about five minutes past when as the flames began to eat their way through the veiling of the front shop those engaged in salvaging were urged to have a care. At exactly 0.8 am just as Constable Mahoney was collecting his band of workers from the interior of the store, a terrific explosion took place dealing death and destruction in the immediate vicinity and sending a column of yellowish white flame and smoke skyward to a height variously estimated at from two to three hundred feet. Simultaneously the burning building appeared to twist round and collapse, except at the nor' eastern corner, while W H Edwards office was levelled to the ground and



the eastern wall of the hotel was forced inwards and the upper portion of the veranda blown away. Hardly a window was left unbroken in the Provincial Hotel, Pelling's boarding house, the Post office, Butler's, Lay's, Cooper's, and Cornwall's business premises. Up and down the roadway lay prostrate forms and to the onlookers at a distance it appeared that a dozen or more had been stricken down. After the first shock of surprise was over (for it had been #stated there were no explosives in the burning building) [continued on next page]

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Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 11 April 1914

[continued from last page] (for it had been# stated there were no explosives in the burning building), those who had escaped with little or no injury to speak of ran to aid those who were less fortunate. Young Taylor who had been at work in the grocery window was found killed outright his head was almost wholly missing and a portion of the arm as well. He had been blown out of the window by the explosion. Vivian was picked up from under the debris and though living at the time was unconscious, and died about an hour later after his removal to the billiard room he was badly injured about the head, besides other hurt his case was hopeless. Postmaster Comeskey was removed from below the debris at the southwest corner. He was unconscious and died on the train before it started to town with the serious cases. M Toohey who was thrown violently on to the end of a seat on the broken hotel balcony was also struck by a flying missile and rendered unconscious. He died in the Wellington Hospital early on Sunday morning. Pelling junior, was removed from Edwards wrecked office crushed and in an unconscious condition. He never rallied but passed away at the hospital on the Monday afternoon. W Flynn's body was not found until after three o'clock on Sunday morning. As a matter of fact he was not known to be missing until his body was discovered lying underneath the wreckage and extinguished timbers on the footway with the feet burned, while searching for traces of the constable - death in Flynn's case had been instantaneous. The remains of Constable Mahoney were found some three hours later almost incinerated. He had evidently been driven by the explosion against the double wall dividing the drapery from the other departments. His legs had been broken and as the body was found near the centre of the disturbance it is certain that his death was instantaneous. The remains were identified beyond doubt by the presence of a pair of handcuffs. Of those injured the most serious cases are those of James Hagan and Virgil McGovern. Both were blown into the street and sustained serious wounds on the head and body and necessitating their removal to the Wellington Hospital as their condition was most critical and bits of debris had been forced into the flesh. Both are reported to be doing well the recovery in Hagan's case being most wonderful. Those sustaining injury to a lesser degree but who were rendered unable to work were Frank B Weaver, Charles Walters and Thomas Costello (all railway employees), Augustus Vosper, and Andrew Hunter. P Story was severely bruised about the right side and arm but has pluckily stuck to his work. E Crabtree, Albert Collett, Percy Stott and Charlton D. Morpeth received minor injuries which temporarily incapacitated them all were thrown down by the explosion. Mesdames Pratt and Swanson and Messrs G Lay, N Williams, C Broad, G Hutchins, R G Mabey, W Crossley, P Hall, K A M Anderson, L W Greenwood and W Wilkinson who were removing goods were in some instances propelled in some distance by the force of the explosion, and all underwent a term of daze or numbness during which they had no clear recollection of what was happening. In rear of the premises and at the bake house H V Benge, H L Pratt, G Taylor senior, T F Boyd, E Mudgway, J P Hall, T Cooper and G Nash were helping and had narrow escapes from flying debris. Willing hands were at work releasing those who were pinned by the debris of the two verandas' and the wrecked grocery building and to remove the wounded. Dr Kemp was quickly on the scene and was ably assisted in his work by H R Gibbs and W Wilkinson who were assiduous in their efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded. Sisters M Ambrose and M Paschal of the House of Mercy also did yeoman service, Doctors Hector and Purdy arrived from the Lower Hutt later on in motor cars and did good work also. A special train was quickly arranged for to depart for town on the arrival of the last train from there conveyed M Toohey, E E H Pelling, J Hagan and V McGovern to Te Aro whence they were taken by ambulance to the hospital. They were attended to on the journey by Dr Kemp and H R Gibbs, accompanied by a number of local residents. The run down occupied forty five minutes. The women folk were as keen in helping minister to the needs of the injured and in comforting the relatives of the victims, as

the men folk were in tackling the rougher tasks. On the collapse of the grocery section as a result of the explosion, there was a perfect furnace of fire threatening destruction in every direction in addition to which flaming debris descended within a somewhat extensive area and called for immediate action. With a high-pressure water supply of over 90 lbs. to the inch and an 8 inch main alongside the burning building, no water was insight save a garden hose at the hotel and another one in rear of Hazelwood's till a little while after the explosion some three quarters of an hour after the alarm was given to the constable. A message had been sent to the turncock to get the hydrant, hose, branch and nozzle and bring them immediately to the conflagration. The appliances were in the public office of the town board, the main double doer of which was only secured by a small Yale latch on one half and a couple of cheap cast iron bolts on the other half. Ongoing to the board office building, turncock W G Goss found the doors locked, but instead of forcing the front door open or breaking a half crown pane of glass in one or other of the twenty one lower sashes and so gaining access to the standpipe and hose etc., he apparently contented himself with sending a boy about half a mile on a bicycle to wake roadman J Greenwood and borrow his key to the back door and when he got the key it was useless, as the town clerk had left the duplicate key in the lock on the inside, so that after all the turncock had to force the door to get the appliances. He considers that the three quarters of an hour delay in getting the water on to the fire saved many lives as there would have been more people on the scene at the time of the explosion and therefore more would have been hurt. [This statement was made in presence of witnesses on Monday last by the turncock to our representative. For our readers information and to show the capacity of the board's appliances we .quote a few facts in connection therewith. Pressure opposite Benge and Pratt's is 90 lbs. to the inch, or 30 lbs. more or than Petone. Size of nozzle  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch. Discharge of water at 90 lbs. per inch is 1563 gallons per minute and would throw that jet effectively for fire extinguishing purposes to a vertical height of 81 feet, or a horizontal distance of 160 feet. In 30 minutes no less than 4680 gallons of water could have been delivered into the burning building by that single  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch nozzle enough to fill a tank 10 ft. long, 10 ft. wide and 7 ft. 6 in. deep. The alarm was given 30 minutes before the explosion took place but the water was not got on to the burning wreck until nearly ten minutes after the explosion. The hose was only. about ten chains distant from the scene or the outbreak yet accuse those who knew where it was kept hadn't gumption enough to break a half-crown pane of glass, the fire was allowed to burn unchecked for over three quarters of an hour. The statement that the appliances are mere toys is untrue. They were made by T W Ballinger to Government pattern and tested by the city brigade. We contend and most people will agree with us that had the hose been got to work within ten minutes of the alarm being given, the explosion should not have taken place Editor] Water from the town board's appliances was available about a quarter of an hour after midnight and attention was divided between the burning wreck and saving the hotel. Fortunately there was no wind and the hotel was soon out of danger, the garden hose subsequently extinguishing incipient outbreaks. Meanwhile an outbreak occurred in the upper portion of Hazelwood's brick drapery store and efforts were concentrated on preventing its spreading. It was close on three o'clock ere the men on the hose achieved success and turned their attention exclusively to extinguishing the glowing furnace of embers which was all that remained of Benge and Pratt's store. As the embers were copied sufficiently to permit the search for the missing Constable, was prosecuted but it was not until after daybreak that the remains were found. The men on the hose did excellent work and all were included in the list of members of the Volunteer Fire Brigade handed in by acting secretary McCurdy at Monday's town board meeting. The list contained twenty four names and the services of the Fire Brigade were accepted by the Board Commissioners McCurdy and Robertson were appointed to represent the Town Board in connection with the Fire Brigade.

**The Funerals** - The first of the funerals left the court house and post office simultaneously shortly after ten thirty on the Tuesday morning after the fatality. The cortege was of considerable length and in addition to large representative bodies of police and railway officers and members of the Hilbernian Society there were the Hons. Bell, Fraser and Herdman, the Mayor of Wellington and the member for the district, postal, town board and harbour board representatives besides a large number of relatives and friends. Denis Mahoney was carried by his immediate relatives, James Comeskey by present and past town

commissioners, William D Flynn by railway employees and M Toohey by his May Morn comrades. As the mournful procession off there were few dry eyes among the thousand or more bystanders. At St Joseph's the cortege was met by the Rev. Father Daly parish priest, who was accompanied by His Grace the Archbishop of Wellington and a large number of the Catholic clergy of the diocese. Solemn High Mass was then celebrated by Father Daly and he afterwards delivered a soul stirring address to those present and a panegyric upon the four members of his flock whose obsequies were being then carried out. He also paid a feeling and appreciative tribute to the three other victims of the explosion who had accompanied his four parishioners in their journey beyond the veil. To the strains of the "Dead March" our late townsmen left St Joseph's for the last time and were laid rest.

**Requiescat in Pace** - At about 1.30 pm John Wesley Vivian's body was home by members of the Town Board

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Evening Post newspaper 20 April 1914

**The Tragic Fire** - Fourth day of inquest - Evidence of Herbert V Benge - Gelignite and other explosives - The inquest on the victims of this Upper Hutt explosion was resumed before Mr W G Riddell, SM District Coroner in the Magistrate's Court today the fourth day of hearing. The victims were Constable Denis Mahoney, James Comeskey late postmaster at Upper Hutt, William Daniel Flynn railway guard, George William Taylor railway porter, John Wesley Vivian shop assistant at Messrs Benge and Pratt's store, where the explosion took place, Michael Toohey bridge contractor, and Evard Edward Henry Pelling a youth of 18 years.

Chief Detective Broberg conducted the case for the police Mr C B Morison KC, with him Mr H. F O'Leary appeared on behalf of Messrs Benge and Pratt, Mr T M Wilford appeared for the relatives of the deceased, Mr E M Sladden watching the proceedings in the interests of the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Co. Ltd. and the Heat, Light and Supplies Co. and Mr H E Evans appeared for the Guardian Assurance Company in whose office Messrs Benge and Pratt's stock was insured.

**Senior Partner in the Box** - The first witness to day was Herbert Victor Benge senior partner in the firm of Benge and Pratt general storekeepers and drapers Upper Hutt. During the week ending 28th March (the eve of the fire) they were engaged stocktaking. Both himself and Mr Pratt and all the employees were helping in the work during and after business hours. Witness took some of the crockery and some of the hardware and some of the bacon, but none of the groceries. The staff comprised the late Mr Vivian employed in the grocery department, Mr Paton as carter, Mr Field as carter, Mr Clough baker, Mr Williams second baker, Miss Mitchell in the drapery department, Miss Hudden ledger keeper, and the boy Cooper. The premise were old. On the north side there was only one floor. The grocery department was on the south side. At the rear of the grocery department was a storeroom and office. On the south side there was an office occupied by Mr Edwards. In the rear north room there were a quantity of preserved eggs, kapok, egg earners, and some galvanised bars. In the north front room, were crockery, tea and table decorations. In the front room south there were empty butter boxes, a quantity of toys, bacon that was all. In the room behind this were patent medicines, cream of tartar and soda also some pickles, he thought and matches. The cartridges were kept on the ground floor. He had no idea how many except 150 of Nobel's ballistic he knew that. He did not know of any flasks of powder. The Chief Detective - When did you finish stocktaking? 'We hadn't finished.

**Where the Explosives were** - You have been in the habit of stocking gelignite, blasting powder and detonators - Yes. Where were the detonators kept? - Out in the back shed. Where was the gelignite kept? - Upstairs in the south front room. And the blasting powder - Also there. Had you taken stock in this room? - No sir; we hadn't taken any of the upstairs at all. Where are the stock sheets - Burnt they weren't taken out of the fixtures. Had you any gelignite on the night of the fire? - I believe not. Had you any blasting powder? - May have had I could not say. When was the last purchase of explosives? - I couldn't tell you sir. How was that - I never bought it so I could not say. I believe it was 6th February but it's only what I hear. Did Mr Pratt do the whole of the buying? - Practically all. Do you know it was usual to stock a case of gelignite at a time? - No I believe it was usual to get a case if we had an order. When were you last in that front south room? - I haven't any idea. Were you in that room in the week ending 28th March? - Not that I remember. Would it be quite possible for a case of

gelnite to be stored in that room without your knowledge - Yes. As much as 201b of gelignite? - Yes.

**Sales Of Gelnite** - What sales of gelignite do you know of since 6th February? - I know of two to Edwards. When were the two sales affected? - I couldn't say. Could you give us an idea? - Well I believe one was on the 14th March, I don't know the date of the other. How much on 14th March? - 5lb. By whom to whom? - By Vivian I believe, to P T Edwards a labourer Upper Hutt. What information have you about that sale? - I have Mr Edwards here. How did you get the information? - From Mr Edwards through an advertisement put in the local paper on Saturday night. When did he speak to you about it? - Yesterday. Was that the first you knew of it? - Yes sir.

**Purchasers Discovered** - What about the other sale? - About a week after the explosion Mr A R Edwards farmer Mungaroa sent word to me through Mr Wilkie's son that he had bought some gelignite from me. How much? - 5lb. Is Mr Edwards here today? - No I understand he was coming but he does not seem to have caught the train. What did Mr Edwards say? - He said he bought some gelignite from Vivian on a Saturday night. Did you ask him what Saturday night? - No. Can you tell me of any other purchases? - No I can't. You know that Mr Fothergill gave evidence as to the purchase of gelignite prior to 6th February? - Yes. You don't dispute it? - No. Do you dispute that Mr Carmichael did not purchase gelignite at your Store? - I still think that he did. But he swore that he did not? - Yes. You didn't keep an explosives book? - No. Apart from the sales to the two persons named Edwards you cannot suggest any other sales? - No. I feel positive I however, that Mr Carmichael purchased gelignite. Would you swear that? - No I wouldn't swear it. If 101b were purchased by the Edwards and 6lb by others recorded in the book, there were still 33lb of gelignite in the premises, so far as you know? - There might have been a ten there and I wouldn't know. Witness was then examined as to the circumstances of the circumstances of the fire and his own movements at the time. He had assisted in getting out the sale and the sewing machine. The fire was in the back south room about half way up the staircase. When the explosion came witness was in the rear of the building just outside the bake house. He heard no report and felt no shock, but saw and felt the flames and sparks. He ran to get out of the road of the falling bits. The bake house was intact? - Yes. And you felt no shock and heard no report? - No. Then why did you run? - To get away from the falling sparks. When did you first learn there had been an explosion? - Not for some long time afterwards. How long? - I couldn't tell you - Next morning some time. On the question of the acetylene generator, witness said the tap had not been turned off by Mr Pratt, who did not go outside the back door. The generator was charged by witness at a quarter to nine. It had also been charged earlier in the evening. Witness could not say whether the tap had been turned off. He personally did not turn it off. He left the premises at a quarter to ten.

**A Mysterious Light** - The Chief Detective - Who was last in the premises? - I was Mr Pratt went out at the front. I went out and locked the oil shed, the grain store, the bake house, and put the key over the ledge of the generator door. I then thought I saw a light in the upstairs window. I walked round to the front door of the shop, let myself in went upstairs, looked round to find nothing. I came down again. Then I discovered it was the reflection of the hotel lights I had seen. Did you speak to Clough? - He spoke to me. He said "Were you upstairs with the lights out." I said "Yes" and walked off. Did you see him next morning? - Yes. I said "That light must have been there after all." What did you mean? - Did you mean the place was a fire when you went in? - No. I thought I saw a, light and then found it explained otherwise, but I was wrong. You mean the place must have been burning? - You may put it that way. Did you strike a light? - Yes. Did you carry a candle? - No. Did you strike more than one match - Probably? Did you make a good search - Yes. How long were you up there - About two minutes. You were in the room where the gelignite was stored - Yes. And you concluded, when you spoke to Clough next morning, that the place must have been on fire - Yes. How long was it before the fire was discovered - About two hours. You were interviewed by Sergeant O'Halloran in connection with the fire? - No. He asked me a question about explosives or something to that effect on Sunday morning. Do you deny that you told him that you left the shop at 10 o'clock and everything was all right? - Yes. You deny that? - Yes. Did you tell him anything about being a light? - No sir. Did you tell any other person - No. The only person you discussed that with was the person who saw you go into the premises after

you locked up on Saturday night - Yes. If you concluded the premises were alight shortly after 10 o'clock on Saturday night, why didn't you tell somebody else about it? - I didn't conclude the place was on fire. Why did you not mention it to somebody else? - I never thought of it. You never thought of an important thing like that, that the place might have been burning a couple of hours before? - I didn't think it was the fire. I thought it was the reflection from the hotel windows. And next morning you told Clough that it must have been the light? - Somebody else might have been up there. Do you deny telling Sergeant O'Halloran that the gas was turned off at the meter? - I do. The Coroner - Do you know that the tap was found turned off - Yes. The Chief Detective - Here is the tap. Can you turn it - Witness (having tried) - No. Witness went on to deny telling Sergeant O'Halloran that Edwards's office was in flames when he came there, that he heard a big explosion. Did you use the words to Sergeant O'Halloran, "I did not stock any gelignite or dynamite" - I would not swear that I did not tell him. I have no idea now I told him I did not stock it. What was the value of the stock at the time of the fire? - About £2800. How do you arrive at that figure? - Our last stocktaking was £2500 and stock had increased considerably. Did you tell Sergeant O'Halloran that you had just finished stocktaking, and the stock was valued at £2800? - No. Did you tell anybody else that there were no explosives in the premises at the time of the fire? - Yes. Could you say whether you told a reporter you had absolutely no explosives on the premises? - I couldn't say. What insurance did you have on the stock - £1800. Had you any insurance on the bake house and contents - The bake house didn't belong to us the baking plant was not insured, but the stock was insured. Was there anything you know of a highly inflammable nature in the upstairs room - Nothing I know of. The witness was next questioned as to the acetylene gas generator. It was usual to turn all the lights off at 9 o'clock on Saturday night. Chief Detective - Did Clough say anything about smelling fire? - No. Have you had any conversation with .Bolton about his purchase of gelignite? No none at all. Have you any knowledge about the stocking of gelignite? - Only through Vivian. How do you mean? - He told me we were out of gelignite. Did you make a note of it? - Yes. Where is it? - I think it was destroyed in the fire. Wasn't it rather unusual for Vivian to tell both you and Mr Pratt about running out of gelignite? - Well we don't like to run out and have none. It was left in Mr Pratt's hands. Vivian told me so that we wouldn't miss it. The Coroner - You might ask the witness what precautions they took with explosives. The Chief Detective - Yes sir.

**In the Explosives Room** - Witness admitted he had been in the explosives room at 10 o'clock on the night of the fire. Why did you not tell me that before when I asked you Mr Morison - I submit that the presumption is unfair. The Chief Detective was enquiring about stocktaking. The Chief Detective - You had no license to stock explosives? - No. Where did you purchase your knee boots from? - It might be Bing, Harris, Sargood's, or Staples. Now, about these two Edwards are they any relation to you? - Yes cousins. Mr Wilford - Why did you tell Mr Broberg there might have been a ton of gelignite there for all you know? - Well I might say that there had been no sales of gelignite recently and I had not taken any special notice of it. Did you believe it required detonation to explode gelignite -Yes. You didn't know heat would or would not explode gelignite? - No. You would naturally believe gelignite safe if you had no detonators on the premises? - I wouldn't chance burning it. Do you know it is a general opinion that gelignite will not explode without detonators? - No I didn't know that. Mr Wilford quoted a report from an enquiry at Home to show that many fatal accidents had occurred through thawing gelignite or otherwise exposing it to heat. The Witness - I can assure you, if I had known there was gelignite there on the place, I would have been a long way from it. Mr, Morison - And got others away? - Yes.

**Where bodies were found** - Mr Wilford - The victims Flynn, Mahoney, and Taylor were immediately under the gelignite room? Yes. And these men were badly shattered? Yes. What do you suggest from that? I can't suggest anything. Can you suggest any other thing that could cause such an explosion as would kill Flynn, Mahoney and Taylor in that way? I can't suggest anything. Witness was shown the generator tap again and suggested it might have been touched after the explosion. There were no burners in the gelignite room.

**Wax Matches** - Mr Wilford - Where did you strike a match when you went upstairs to look at that light? I struck it on the box at the bottom of the stairs. It was a wax vestat. Did you strike another match when you got to the gelignite room? I can't remember. Did you go into the room with a lighted match in your hand? I don't know. It would take two matches? Yes.

More than two? I don't think so. When did the match go out? I can't tell you. Did you come downstairs in the dark? Yes. Did you throw down the last part of the match? I suppose I did. Do you remember whether you lit the second match from the first or the box? I don't remember. When you come down the stairs there was no light burning? No. Then it is quite clear that at ten o'clock that night when you came down there was no fire? That is so. **Reflected Light** - Why did you tell Clough that there must have been a fire? I said that it must have been the light. What light from the hotel could reflect on the window in the gelignite room? It was the back south window. After you came downstairs and out into the street you could still see the light in the back room window? Yes. Was it a steady light? Yes. You were satisfied then it was a reflection? Yes. Don't you think perhaps believing gelignite could only be exploded by detonators you thought it was safe? I assure you I believed that there was none there. Then what could have caused the explosion? The tap was turned off the generator? I couldn't say. You can't account for the sale of all the gelignite? No. You can't give any reason for the boy Cooper telling M'Curdy on the night of the fire before the explosion that there was gelignite upstairs? No. It might have been months before the explosion before I went into that room. I couldn't tell you what was in that room, only what was usually stocked there. To Mr Sladden - Witness had often smelt acetylene gas in the building. He had not the slightest hesitation in striking matches at 4 o'clock in the morning when he went through the shop. He had smelt no gas on the particular night when he went upstairs. The first chance of leakage in the main building would probably be in the drapery department. There were five drums of carbide in stock. At this stage the adjournment was taken. The evidence of the witness Herbert V Bengé was continued this afternoon. He was examined by Mr Sladden on behalf of the companies interested in acetylene as to the gas pipe reticulation of the building and other details of a similar character. There had been practically very little leakage. To Mr Evans - The 1913 stock sheets were in the office fixtures. The 1914 sheets were not yet made up. The particulars were only on loose slips of paper. No other books and papers were recovered except what were in the safe. To Mr Morison He did not at the time realised an explosion had occurred and he had not a very clear memory of what happened afterwards. People had told him he did things which he could not himself remember doing. He remembered putting Mr Pratt on a box after the explosion. Pratt was staggering. He had no idea what time this was after the explosion. He had no recollection of going to the generator house after the explosion. He had been told he had gone there. Later on he had taken part in trying to extinguish the fire. There were many rats in the building it was over-run with rats. The building had been used for a store for twenty-five years to the witness's knowledge. The walls of the upper room were lined, but he could not say whether there were any loose boards. He did not know whether any additional gas piping was put into the building when the new generator was installed. There was one small compo pipe; the rest were iron. (Proceeding)

*(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 20 April 1914 page 7)*

#### Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914

Disaster attributed to Acetylene (Special to Herald) Wellington this day. Six men were killed and at least a dozen injured by an Explosion at the fire at Upper Hutt during the early hours of Sunday. The disaster generally attributed to acetylene gas. Bengé and Pratt, general storekeepers, who occupied the wrecked premises, state that nothing in the nature of high explosives' were kept. Half an hour after the fire broke out, on the upper floor there was a sharp swift outburst. The floor was driven with tremendous violence down upon the men who were on the ground floor endeavouring to salvage goods. Five were killed outright. A fragment of plate-glass from the shop window was blown into the street, seriously injuring several men. The dead are Constable Denis Mahoney married with five children, James C Comesky postmaster at Upper Hutt married with grown up family, Taylor railway porter single John Wesley Vivian grocer's assistant single, Flynn railway guard 35 years married, G Tuohey bush worker single. Those seriously injured are Virgil McGovern dentist Upper Hutt, E Palling blacksmith and boarding house keeper, Joseph Hagan Defence Department employee. These are suffering severely from concussion and were more or less unconscious during Sunday. Pieces of glass were embedded in their flesh and doctors had to operate to remove them. Hagan's upper jaw was smashed and his left arm and hand were badly lacerated by glass. The dead were in some cases, dreadfully mutilated. Constable Mahoney could

scarcely be identified. Another victim had his head and arm blown off. Tuohey who was alive when taken from the ruins sustained a fractured skull. He only survived till he reached Wellington hospital. Comesky the postmaster who was under the veranda at the time of the disaster was blown into the middle of the road and so badly injured that he died before a special train with the injured could be dispatched to the city. Benge and Pratts store and Hazelwood's drapery store adjoining were completely destroyed. One end of the Provincial hotel was damaged.

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Poverty Bay Herald newspaper 30 March 1914 page 4)

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## Archives New Zealand Wellington

### **THIS FILE HAS PLANS of the BUILDINGS and 2 very important PHOTGRAPHS**

(page 12) James Gerald Comeskey sworn saith:-

My father's full name was James Comeskey. He was Postmaster at the Upper Hutt. On the night of the fire at Benge and Pratt's I was present. I saw my father there. When I first saw him he was just outside Edward's office. I see the office on the plan Exhibit A. I saw him come out and go for a screwdriver. I did not see him return and did not see till after the explosion & then saw him under some timber where Edwards office had stood. The office was not burning but was down. At the time of the explosion I was outside the door of the drapery department of Benge and Pratt's. I did not hear the explosion, but saw timber falling around. The timber came from Benge and Pratt's. I did not see Edwards office fall. The explosion was 5 or 10 minutes after I heard my father speak about a screwdriver. About a minute after the explosion I went over to where Edwards office had stood. I then saw my father under the fallen wall of the office. The South wall of Benge and Pratts building was down. I had to wait till the water was put on before going to my fathers assistance. The flames were coming from Benge and Pratts. After the water was turned on, I, with others got my father out from under the timber. After we got him out I went and got Dr Kemp who was just leaving home for the scene of the fire. He afterwards attended to my father and ordered his removal to the billiard room. From there my father was put on a special train to go to the Hospital at Wellington. He died before the train left Upper Hutt. I afterwards saw his dead body at home.

Benge and Pratts, has a telephone.

My father left the premises to get a screwdriver to get a telephone down. When his body was recovered he had the receiver round him. The lephone was screwed into the wall at Edwards place. My father as Postmaster had control of the telephone in the district. I can say that he met his death while trying to save Government property.

There was a small hose playing on the hotel.

(signed by J G Comeskey and witnessed by Coroner William G Riddell)

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 box 476 COR 1914/515 Coroners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis; Comeskey James; Flynn William; Taylor George William and Vivian John Wesley also use Micro U 5474)

E C Thomas

(Other evidence) - Just after that a man whom I do not know came the door of Benge s shop, and called out "Are there any explosives on the shop?" and deceased Vivian called out "None whatever". After I had recovered to get Mr Comeskey from Edwards office. A man named Scott called out "For god's sake help me, a man had been burnt. The man that Scott referred to was Mr Comeskey. He was caught under the front of Edwards office. It had been demolished by the explosion. Scott, Walters and two of Comeskey's sons got Mr Comeskey out. (Other evidence)

(signed by Ernest Charles Thomas and witnessed by Coroner William G Riddell)

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 box 476 COR 1914/515 Coroners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis; Comeskey James; Flynn William; Taylor George William and Vivian John Wesley also use Micro U 5474)

Frederick William Kemp

(Other evidence) – While in the billiard room ther was bought in the body of Taylor who was dead, Mr Comeskey who was living and Mr Vivian also living. Mr Comeskey's injuries consisted of a few abrasions at the back of the head and forehead and burns on the left leg. He was semiconscious. I at once ordered his removal to the hospital train. (Other evidence) – Shock was the cause of Comeskey's death. (Other evidence) – In regards to the caus of death of Mr

Comeskey it was by concussion and shock. The superficial wounds he had could not have caused death. (Other evidence) – In Comeskey's case fire or cits had nothing to do with his death. (Other evidence)

(signed by Dr Frederick William Kemp and witnessed by Coroner William G Riddell)

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 box 476 COR 1914/515 Coroners Inquests Case files Wellington – Mahoney Denis; Comeskey James; Flynn William; Taylor George William and Vivian John Wesley also use Micro U 5474)

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Wellington 13 August 1914

Hon H D Bell Wellington

Dear Sir

I have the honour of calling to your recollection a conversation between yourself & myself in reference to the representations made to me by the relatives of those who lost their lives during the Explosion at the Upper Hutt. You will doubtless remember sending telegrams of condolences to the relatives of the injured, after obtaining their addresses from me. It is of that occasion I write. I informed you at the time that the relatives required my services professionally to advise them daily and to act for them during the inquest proceedings & in advising in their claims against Benge & Pratt & C, and I asked you, Sir, whether the Government under the circumstances would pay the legal charges for them. You may remember Sir, that I informed you that if your Government would not pay the costs, I would do the work for nothing as I did not intend charging the widows and those who were left a single penny. I am still of that mind. Mrs Comeskey who has been generously dealt with has asked me what she owes me & I have told her she owes me nothing, & I have adopted that attitude all through. You will remember you informed me that your personally thought that I should act [sic] & that you personally thought the Government would be willing to recommend that the relative should not bear the cost, this you informed me that you would have to see Mr Herdman on the subject. Whether the matter has escaped your notice I do not know, but at any late I am sure you will pardon the reminder. In conclusion if you think that the Government should not pay, that is an end to the matter for all time, I shall not bother again on the subject & the work will not be charged for.

I have the honour to be Sir

Yours obedient servant

Thomas M Wilford

(Reference Archives New Zealand Wellington C 466 169 (Justice) J 1 894 1914/1212 from T M Wilford Wellington date 31 August 1914 subject As to whether Government would pay legal expenses of the relatives of those who lost their lives by the explosion at Upper Hutt)

29<sup>th</sup> August 1914

Dear Sire

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> instant, which has been forwarded to me by my colleague, the Hon H D Bell, asking whether the Government would pay the legal expenses of the relatives of those who lost their lives by the explosion at the Upper Hutt in connection with the inquest proceedings etc.

In reply, I have to say that the matter has received very careful consideration and I regret that the Government is unable to see its way to comply with the request.

Yours faithfully signed A L Herdman

T M Wilford Esq., M.P. Wellington

(Reference Archives New Zealand Wellington C 466 169 (Justice) J 1 894 1914/1212 from T M Wilford Wellington date 31 August 1914 subject As to whether Government would pay legal expenses of the relatives of those who lost their lives by the explosion at Upper Hutt)

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Full page with great PHOTO and information about individual stories of witnesses etc.

New Zealand Truth Saturday 04 April 1914 page 5