BURGESS, John 21 March 1925

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Traffic Inspector	York	Dort car derailed

John Burgess was 44 years of age when he was fatally injured when the Dort rail car (A tourer set up to run on rails) he and three others were travelling derailed and rolled over. The other occupants were also injured and later recovered. John lived at Subiaco with his wife Marion Elizabeth and his daughters Doris and Edna. He is interred at Karrakatta Cemetery (ANGLICAN/MA/0127)

The York Railway Motor Tragedy.
INQUEST UPON THE DEATH OF Mr. JOHN BURGESS.
The adjourned enquiry into the death of Mr. John Burgess which took place at the York Hospital on March 21 as a result of injuries sustained through the derailment of a Dort motor between the Ford and River Street crossings, was resumed on Wednesday morning at the Court House, before Mr. A. H. Mercer, J.P. (Acting Coroner), and a jury consisting of Messrs. C. V. Harris (foreman, T. Harkness, and T. T. Parker. Mr. M. Stormon appeared on behalf of the Commissioner, Mr. H. L Evans for Mrs. Burgess (widow of deceased), and Mr. S. B. Connor for Mr. J. Hickey, who owing to continued indisposition as a result of the accident, was unable to be present.

Many witnesses were examined and the proceedings lasted until after 6 p.m. In consequence of the lengthy nature of the evidence a full report, owing to the exigencies of space, is held over till the next issue.

The following verdict was returned by the jury "That John Burgess came to his death on March 21 from injuries received through the derailment of a Dort motor car on the railway line between Ford and River streets."

Source: *Trove/Eastern Districts Chronicle (York, WA) Friday 29 May 1925 Page 2.*

DEATH OF MR JOHN BURGESS
INQUEST PROCEEDINGS
The inquest touching the death of Mr John Burgess, who was killed by a railway motor car overturning near York on March 2lst, was commenced on Wednesday before the Acting Coroner (Mr. A. H. Mercer) and a jury comprising Messrs. O. V. Harris (foreman), T. Harkness and T. J. Parker. Mr. H. L. Evans appeared for the widow of the deceased, and Mr. Stormon for the Commissioner of Railways.

The only evidence called was that of Mr. George Peters, an occupant of the car at the time of the accident.

Mr. Peters, District Loco. Superintendent at Northam, said that about 1.45' on Saturday, March 2lst, a telephone message was received at Northam notifying of a breakdown near Gilgering. Arrangements were made to dispatch two special breakdown trains to the scene of the accident. The Dort railway motor car was then commissioned and witness in company with the late Mr. Burgess and Messrs. Hickey and Fruin left in the car for Gilgering. The party left Northam at 2.5 p.m. Mr. Burgess was driving and Mr. Hickey sitting next to him in the front seat, and witness was sitting in the back seat behind Mr. Burgess, and the other occupant behind Mr. Hickey. He did not notice what time it was when they loft Spencer's Brook, but it was about 2.40 when they left Burges Siding. About one mile out from the Brook, Mr. Hickey relieved Mr. Burgess at the wheel in order for the latter to have some lunch., Mr. Hickey was driving the car at the time of the accident, he had no idea

what time the accident happened. On the trip they had averaged about 35 miles per hour. The car always slowed down coming towards crossings and facing points, and to average 35 miles an hour, it would be necessary in some places to travel over 40. He remembered the car overturning. All the occupants were thrown out. He first saw Mr. Hickey who was unconscious. Mr. Burgess appeared to be in great pain and did not speak. Mr. Fruin was in a similar condition. When witness was able to stand he walked back and found the spot where the car had left the rails. He could see nothing whatever to account for the accident. Just prior to the accident the car was travelling at ,30 miles an hour. After he had inspected the spot where the car had left the rails, he walked to the railway station and from there was taken to the York hospital, where he was detained for three days. The car had done over 8000 miles and was in good order. Mr. Hickey was accustomed to driving the car. After the car left the line it headed towards the fence.

To Mr. Evans.The car belonged to the Traffic Branch. It was not examined after every trip but generally once a week by a mechanic. The car came in from a trip on the morning of the accident. No repairs were done to it. The maximum speed which the ear should travel was 45 miles an hour: He had seen it do 50. The only thing he felt to indicate that the car had left the rails was a bump. There are only two cars in commission, and it is noticeable on both that the front left side wheel has a tendency , to hug the rail.. This defect, in his opinion, was not sufficient to cause the wheel to mount the rails.

To the Foreman of the Jury. The Dort cars used by the Railway Department are still in the experimental Stage.

The inquest was then adjourned to a date to be fixed.

Source: *Trove/The Avon Gazette and York Times (WA) Friday 1 May 1925 Page 2.*