LONG, Edgar Robert Jarvis 2 February 1911

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Driver	Meelon	Loco Ja29 derailed.

Edgar Long was 33 years of age when he died in the derailment of locomotive Ja29. Edgar had jumped clear of the engine but was struck by following wagons as they also derailed. Edgar was married to Eunice and they lived at West Perth. Eunice survived Edgar by 41 years. They are both interred in the same grave at Karrakatta Cemetery (ANGLICAN/FC/0479).

The Meelon Accident.
INQUEST ON DRIVER LONG.
The adjourned inquest on Edgar Robert Jarvis Long was resumed on February 14th, in the Court House Pinjarra, at 10 a.m.

Mr. Conning appeared for the widow of the deceased man. Mr. Lavan on behalf of the Locomotive Engine Drivers Firemen and Cleaners' Union and Mr. Mills on behalf of the Commissioner of railways.

At the previous sitting the and jury viewed the body of the deceased man, and now immediately proceeded to call evidence to show cause of death.

The first witness called was James Doyle, the guard of the ill-fated train. He said that he was in charge of a special train on February 2nd running between Holyoake and Pinjarra. Long was driver and Gee fireman. The train consisted of engine, tender, fourteen trucks (one empty and the rest loaded) and the brake van. The empty truck was secondfrom the engine. The load was 253 tons including the brake van. That was an ordinary load. The train left holyoake at 6.25 p.m. and shunted at Dwellingup and Marinup. Everything appeared alright. There are some sharp curves coming downhill which were negotiated safely. When within 200 vards of Meelon Siding the accident occurred . There was a sudden stoppage of the train. Got out and walked down the train and found three trucks off the line and another half off. Did not think it a very violent stoppage. The whole engine and tender were off the rails. The truck next to the engine was on its sidethe next truck was capsized also. The third and fourth trucks were upright but derailed. The line was torn up at this place. Could not see the driver or fireman at first. Found the fireman on the same side of the track the engine came off. Asked him if Ted was alright. He replied, "Yes, I think so. I saw him leave the engine and I followed". "I went down to see the driver and I found him under the leading truck, quite dead. I sent over to Mr. Salter s for a trap and came to Pinjarra to report to Station Master at Pinjarra station. Returned same night to scene of accident, saw deceased removed from under the train where I had found him. Was at the scene of the accident at daybreak next morning. I had a look at the line for half a mile back before anything was shifted. The road was damaged and the line shifted for that distance. The train was travelling at 12 to 15 miles per hour. I do not know what was the cause of the line shifting. The line is partly ballasted, the sleepers were not all covered with sand in places the sleepers were extending beyond the ballast. The trucks that did not leave the rails were uninjured as far as witness could say. The driver had not lost control of the train coming down. If the train had been running at 30 miles an hour we should all have been killed and the train piled up. Saw the deceased's boot (produced) taken from under the engine.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lavan; There were turntables at Pinjarra and Dwellingup on which the on which an engine can be turned. When the train arrived at Meelon Siding half the load would have been put off. The engine returned for another load and picked up first load when arriving again at Meelon. Compelled to run one way or another tender first. There is an objection to running tender first as the fixed wheels of the tender will not negotiate a turn as well as the engine's bogie-wheels.

All the train that left the rails went off on the inside of the curve. The line was twisted on the same side as the train came off. The witness had never seen a road in such a bad state.

Coss-examined by Mr. Mills; I did not know it the twist was in the rails before the train came down or not."

Mr William Gee, the fireman of the train, was next witness. He said he was firing the engine and deceased, Long, was driver. They were coming from Holyoake to Meelon with load, and should then have gone back to Dwellingup for another load, and on the return journey would pick up the first load at Meelon and bring both loads into Pinjarra. Just before reaching Meelon the tender jumped off the line. The time was between 8 and 8.30 p.m. It was quite dark. The tender went off first and the rest of the train followed. Some quarter of a mile before scene of accident the tender was rocking. Witness had seen the place in daylight since. As soon as the tender left the rails the driver mounted the collar of the engine and appeared to jump on the opposite side to that on which the train went on witness followed immediately. Did not see Long again until Guard Doyle and witness searched for him. Doyle went to Pinjarra to report, and witness remained in charge of train.

Author's Note: *Other witnesses were examined and essentially added little to information provided by Mr. Doyle and Mr. Gee, Their testimony would add nothing to this narrative.*

THE VERDICT

The verdict of the Jury was in the following terms .

We find that deceased, Edgar Robert Jarvis Long, came to his death at Meelon Siding, near Pinjarra, on the second day of February 1911 from shock and injuries received through the derailment of an engine and trucks, and that the derailment was caused through the line not being in proper working condition at the time. We are of the opinion that engines should not be run tender first and that the line be put in proper repair without delay.

Source: *Trove/South Western Advertiser (Perth) Thursday 16 February 1911 Page 5.*