MURPHY, Patrick Joseph 7 November 1906

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Shunter	Perth	Shunting Operations

Patrick Murphy was 29 years of age when he was fatally injured while engaged in shunting duties at West Perth. Patrick was run over after getting his foot caught in a check rail while attempting uncouple wagons. Patrick lived in Perth and is interred at Karrakatta Cemetery (ROMAN CATHOLIC/CA/0298).

A SHUNTER'S DEATH.
CORONER'S INQUEST.
At the City Coroner's Court yesterday, before Mr. J. Elliott. J.P., the adjourned inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Patrick Murphy, a railway employee, who was run over and killed on November 7, by a railway truck at the Melbourne road crossing, was resumed. Corporal Sunter conducted the case on behalf of the police.

Charles E. Taylor, a signalman, stated that on the date in question he was on duty at the signal-box at the Melbourne-road crossing at about 1.16 p.m:, when he saw the deceased shunting trucks. The engine was about 100 yards west of the cabin, the end of the train being just clear of the crossing. The deceased was shunting back on to No. 13 points, and was standing but a few feet away from the trucks. Witness went to adjust the points as the deceased requested, and just as he pulled down the lever he heard cries from below. He looked out of the cabin window and saw the body of the deceased underneath the wheels of a truck, the train being still in motion. Witness then showed the danger signal and stopped the train within about 25 yards.

The body was then removed from beneath the truck. Subsequently a boot was taken from between one of the rails and a check rail.

Walter Scott, who acted as fireman on the engine engaged in the shunting, said that his engine was shunting some 21 trucks. At 1.20 p.m. the engine was stationary at about 150 yards west of the Melbourne Road crossing. After receiving the signal from the deceased the train proceeded at a rate of between 6 and 8 miles an hour for a few yards, when Murphy seemed to move towards the trucks and disappear. Several men on the crossing waved their hands frantically, and the danger signal was shown from the signal cabin. He saw a body being rolled over by the wheels of the trucks. The engine was pulled up in about 50 feet, after receiving the danger signal.

To the foreman: The engine was fitted with a powerful hand-brake. Had the vacuum brake been used the engine might have been pulled up a little quicker. The vacuum brake was not used in shunting.

To the Coroner : The regulation speed for shunting was from 4 to 6, miles an hour. The effect of the vacuum was instantaneous on the engine, but did not stop the train instantaneously.

At this stage the inquest was adjourned: until Monday, at 2.30 p.m.

Source: *Trove/The West Australian (Perth) Wednesday 21 November 1906 Page 3.*

A SHUNTER'S DEATH,
CORONER'S INQUEST VERDICT OF ACCIDENTAL DEATH.

The adjourned inquest concerning the death of Patrick Murphy, a railway employee who was run over and killed on November 7 by a railway truck at the Melbourne-road crossing, was concluded yesterday before Mr. J. Elliott, J.P.,- Acting Coroner, and a jury of three. Corporal Sunter conducted the inquiry'on behalf of the police; Mr E. Casson, general secretary, of the Western Australian Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees, watched the proceedings on behalf of the deceased's relatives; and Suppintendent Stead represented the Railway Department.

At the previous hearing the evidence of Walter Scott;. fireman; and Charles E. Taylor, a signalman, was taken; From their testimony it appears that the deceased was shunting back on to No.13 point, and was standing a few feet away, from some trucks that were being run into position. A boot was found afterwards between one of the rails and a check rail. The jury had visited the scene of the accident since the last sitting.

Alfred Marks said that he was standing near the railway gates in Melbourne Road on the day of the accident, and he saw the trucks being shunted past. He saw Murphy there. The trucks were going towards the man who was signaling to the driver with his hands, walking backwards all the time. When the trucks were close, up, the deceased's hat seemed to blow off and he (the deceased)' made an effort to catch it, and his foot got caught in the rail. Murphy called out "George" three times before the truck struck him, and then he caught hold of the buffer, and called out again "George, I'm done." The deceased then fell to the ground. Witness called out to the driver to stop as soon as he saw the man's predicament. Deceased was dragged about 40 yards from where the accident happened. The brakes did not appear to act until after 20 yards had been got over.

To Superintendent Stead: He could not see the driver from where he stood, and could not say whether the brakes were applied or not.

To the jury: The deceased was the only shunter on the south side.

To Mr. Casson: The brakes might have been applied.

Corporal Anderson said that he received a telephone message on the day of the accident, and proceeded to the scene. When he got there the body, which was considerably mutilated, had been taken from the line. He found a boot 41 yards 17in., West from the place where the deceased was picked up. It had been caught between the main line and the guard-rail at the extreme end of the latter.

Julius Volkmann, a fettler in the employ of the Railway Department, said that he was working about 50 yards from the crossing on the day of the accident and hearing some screams from the south side of the trucks, he looked up and saw a man being dragged by the trucks. He ran up and caught hold of Murphy, and the latter then said, "Oh, God! I'm done." While witness held him. two more wheels passed over him before witness could get Murphy away. The man was then alive, but died shortly afterwards.

To the jury: He could not say who took, the boot out of the rails. Two men were shunting. A plan of the locality was here put in by Superintendent Stead.

Locomotive Inspector Rigg said, in reply,to the jury, that the brake, on the engine on that day would not act as instantaneously as a vacuum brake. The regulations of the Department prohibited the use

of the vacuum brake while shunt'ing. He was satisfied that the brake on the engine gave better results than a vacuum brake would.

H. Bolton, M.L.A., ex-locomotive driver and sub-inspector in the Railway Department, stated that he had examined firemen who had applied for driver's certificate on, the subject of the application of a vacuum brake. In his opinion, the vacuum brake was instantaneous, and in most cases more powerful than the hand-brake, as the latter took more than twice the time to get the blocks on the wheels. The vacuum brake was the same on all engines. There was no brake that would have prevented the accident, but if the vacuum brake were attached the man might not have lost his life, but only a foot or leg.

To Superintendent Stead: The train if travelling eight miles an hour, and with a load of 170 tons (exclusive of engine and tender) could be brought to a standstill in about 100ft and in nearly twice that distance with a hand Brake.

J. Pidgeon a civil engineer in the employ of the Railway Department, said, in reply to the Coroner, that the rail was 4in. deep. The flange of the wheel went down about an inch and three quarters. If a block were put in at the end of the guard rail, he did not think that it would make any difference as to liability of accident.

The jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased came to his death by being accidentally knocked down and run over by a train whilst in the course of his employment. The following rider was added:--"That all rails and check rails should be immediately blocked up for the safety of the shunters and the general public using the particular crossing. We also consider that if the vacuum brake had been on that particular engine there was a probability of the deceased's life being saved, and only the loss of his leg. The services of an assistant shunter would also be the means of preventing such accidents in the future."

Source: *Trove/The West Australian (Perth) Tuesday 27 November 1906 Page 7.*

Death Notice.
MURPHY. On the 7th November, 1906, killed whilst engaged in shunting in the: Perth Yards, PATRICK JOSEPH, the dearly-loved third son of Martin Murphy, of Culcairn, N.S.W., and brother of E. F. Murphy, Walkaway; aged 29 years. R.I.P.A.

Source: *Trove/Sunday Times (Perth) Sunday 11 November 1906 Page 1.*