Mc DONALD, James Hugh 10 February 1938

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Guard	Cranbrook	Shunting operations

James McDonald was 55 years of age when he was struck and critically injured while shunting at Cranbrook. A number takers lamp may have been mistaken for a signal to move the locomotive and wagons forward and this resulted in James' injuries. James died 9 days after the accident while being treated at Albany Public Hospital. James lived at Cranbrook with his wife and their family of five, he is interred at Karrakatta Cemetery (ROMAN CATHOLIC/AA/0430A).

RAILWAY GUARD'S DEATH.
ALBANY Feb. 18
James Hugh McDonald (55), senior railway guard, who received severe spinal injuries and a crushed chest when struck by a truck during shunting operations In the Cranbrook railway yard on the night of February 9, died at 4:30 this afternoon in the Government hospital. Mr. McDonald was highly esteemed locally and throughout the service. He leaves a widow and a family of five.

Source: *Trove/The West Australian (Perth) Saturday 19 February 1938 Page 21.*

CRANBROOK FATALITY
CORONER'S INQUEST.
An inquest into the death of James Hugh McDonald, railway guard, of Cranbrook, was held at the Court House, Albany, on Friday morning.

Mr. A. H. Richardson, J.P., was Acting Coroner.

Arthur Robinson Home, medical practitioner at Albany said that in response to a telephone message on the night of February 9 he proceeded to Cranbrook to attend an injured man. There was another medical man in attendance. An examination by them disclosed that the man was suffering from a fractured spine, injury to the spinal cord, and a crushed left chest. He was taken to the Albany Hospital where his condition gradually became weaker, and he died on February 18.

Theodore Caimanos, railway goods porter, said he was working on the train ex-Albany that arrived at Cranbrook about 7.55 p.m., Feb. 9. went to the goods shed and carried some goods for despatch. Assistant-stationmaster Coe joined him and a few seconds later a voice from the darkness was heard saying, "I'm done." several times. He recognised it as McDonald's and rushed out at once to find him lying on his back about 18 feet from the points against the rails on the platform side. He was joined soon after by Guard Payne and later Guard Parker and they carried deceased to the railway barracks. McDonald was conscious at the time but did not say how the accident had occurred.

James BIythe, locomotive driver, gave evidence regarding his taking over of the train from Driver Galvin at Cranbrook about 8 p.m. the night McDonald was hit. The engine was at the water column at the end of the yard when he assumed control. He went forward until he had passed over the points and stopped. There were several trucks behind the engine that had to be shunted. At this juncture he spoke to McDonald telling him he was going to reverse; McDonald told him to go ahead. Shortly afterwards he looked back and saw a white light, the signal to come back. He did not think it was McDonald's light as he had spoken to him on the other side only shortly before. The engine was then reversed, someone called out that a person was hit and he stopped the locomotive at once.

Colin Walter Butler, railway fireman, said he was with BIythe when the changeover took place at Cranbrook. He did not see any signal and had just mentioned to the driver that they were in reverse when the engine was stopped. One thing that struck him was the fact that the engine had gone back on the same line as before, meaning that either the guard had made a mistake or another truck was being put back. Looking forward he saw the goods porter running down towards the points. Shortly after Guard Payne came and asked him to help carry the injured man to the barracks. All McDonald said whilst he was present was that they had had come back before he was ready Edward George Parker, railway guard, said he was on the train with McDonald on the night in question. He and McDonald were engaged sheeting a truck at Cranbrook, and as two cards were required he went to the station to get them. On his way back he was told by A.S.M. Coe that an accident had occurred. A few days later he visited McDonald in hospital and heard him making a statement to Mr. Whitney, Station master at Albany. The deceased had said he had shown a red light and stepped across the rail to unlock the points. Before he' was able to complete this action he was knocked over by the truck. Witness said he had known BIythe for some time and could honestly say he was not the type to take unnecessary risks.

Arthur Payne, railway guard, said he commenced taking numbers of trucks on the train as soon as it reached Cranbrook. He started working from the back towards the engine and was carrying a lamp under his right arm. It would have been quite possible for the engine driver to mistake his light for a signal. He first knew of the accident when Caimanos called to him.

Albert E. G. Whitney, railway stationmaster, stationed at Albany, described a visit to the Albany hospital on February 11 when the deceased had given a full statement of the accident. No prompting was necessary to get this information. The Coroner's verdict was that the deceased, McDonald, had come to his death accidentaly as a result of injuries received when he was struck by a moving truck at Cranbrook on the night of February 9, 1938.

Messrs McLeod, Railway Inspector; E. W. Vaughan, District Superintendent; W. Rudinger, Secretary Local Drivers* Union, and G. Keeting, Secretary Amalgamated Society Railway Employees watched the interests of the various parties concerned.

Source: *Trove/Great Southern Herald (Katanning)* Wednesday 16 March 1938 Page 3.