McKEOWN, James H. W. 5 January 1915

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Guard	Coonana, TAR	Guard's Van derailed

See also: Thomas BRODERICK, Patrick HALL and Thomas KEARNEY.

James McKeown and the others named here died when the brake van they were travelling in derailed and overturned at Coonana on the Trans-Australia Railway (TAR). A coroner's inquest determined that their deaths were accidental.

ACCIDENT

On Tuesday evening a terrible, railway disaster occurred on the Trans-Australian line. A train loaded with sleepers left the depot for the lead of the line. The brake van was occupied by 17 men. When they reached the 102 mile the brake van left the rails and bumped very heavily along the sleepers, being dragged along for some, distance. Eventually the coupling broke and the van Turned a complete somersault, killing three men outright and more or less injuring those remaining, one of whom died about an hour later. The engine and trucks travelled out of sight before the driver discovered the van missing, when he at once returned.

Those killed instantaneously were James McKeown (guard), Patrick Hall (wagon examiner), and Thomas Broderick (Laborer). Thomas Kearney (Laborer) was found in the van, and died an hour after he had been rescued.

Those who were injured are William Lane, Rufus Hugh O'Brien, Michael Kelly, Patrick Quinn, Peter Carton, James Fitzosbourne, Thomas Clancy, William Pearce, and P. Esmond.

The hospital car, which had been hastily dispatched to the scene, returned to the depot at 9 o'clock next morn ing with the fearfully mangled dead and the injured, who had been rendered all possible assistance. The funeral of the four victims took place on Thursday morning, with about 250 comrades of the deceased walking in front of the hearses and a large number of vehicles behind. The cortege proceeded to the. Catholic portion of the Kalgoorlie Cemetery for the four dead men were Catholics. The Very Rev. Dean Kelly assisted by Father Doddy, of Boulder, performed the last offices at the graveside and the former said a few words very appropriate for the occasion to those around.

A coronial inquest determined that the deaths were accidental.

Source: *Trove/The W.A. Record (Perth) Saturday 16 January 1915 Page 14.*