NEWBY, Thomas 20 April 1906

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Fireman	Kurrawang Woodline	Locomotive “SADIE” derailed

Thomas Newby was 26 years of age when he was fatally crushed in the cab of the locomotive "SADIE". The locomotive had crashed into stationary trucks which had previously broken away while being propelled by "SADIE" and another locomotive, "KURRAWANG". When the collision occurred "KURRAWANG" crashed through intervening water tankers and crashed into the rear of "SADIE", pinning its driver and Thomas, the fireman, against the boiler. Thomas died 3 hours later while still trapped. His body was not extricated from the wreckage for some 23 hours. Thomas lived in Kalgoorlie and was interred at Kalgoorlie Cemetery.

NEWBY'S DEATH
AN IMPORTANT WITNESS DISCOVERED.
THE REAL CAUSE OF THE SMASH.
An interesting development has taken place in connection with the train accident at Kurrawang, by which Thomas Newby met his death under shocking circumstances.

"From information received," the police were led to make a search for a man named Henry Wilson, who it was alleged, had ridden on one of the trucks composing the train. This man, who is a dryblower, was found by Mounted constable Duggan at Jourdie Hills today. He made a statement to the effect that he boarded the train at the 13 mile hill, and rode in one of the trucks about the third or fourth from the engine. After going about seven miles he felt the trucks slow down, and at length stop, and on looking out found that the engine was nowhere in sight, the trucks having evidently broken away. He lit a fire at the side of the line, and by the time the blaze was started heard the engine coming. He waved his arms, when he knew he could be seen by the driver, as a signal to stop, but was evidently not observed, and the Engine crashed into the stationary trucks. The result was, as previously stated, the unfortunate man, Newby, being pinned against the boiler by the tender. Wilson waited about until assistance was brought, and then walked into Kalgoorlie. He then went back to Jourdie Hills, where he was found by Constable Duggan. The inquest wilt take place Tuesday, at 11 o'clock, at Kalgoorlie.

Source: *Trove/The Evening Star (Boulder) Friday 27 April 1906 Page 3.*

Kurrawang Railway Accident.
THE DEATH OF FIREMAN NEWBY.
INQUEST PROCEEDINGS.
TRUCKS BREAK AWAY.
The adjourned enquiry touching the cause of the death of Thomas Rchard Newby, the fireman who was killed on the Kurrawang woodline on Friday, April 20 last, was continued before Mr. P. Whelan, J.P., acting coroner, and Messrs. Arthur Burnell, T. W. Browning, and Donald Stewart, jurymen, at the Kalgoorlie courthouse on Tuesday.

Mr. Phillips (Messrs. Martin and Phillips) represented the Goldfields Firewood Supply Co.; Mr. R. W. Hall watched the proceedings on behalf of the relatives of the deceased; and Corporal Edmondson appeared on behalf of the police.

EVIDENCE OF MR. LESLIE.

William Leslie stated that he was the manager for the W.A. Goldfields Firewood Supply Company. On the morning of April 20 last the engine "Sadie" was sent from Kurrawang to the No. 9 Camp 41 miles away to pick up a rake of wood. Before they started they arranged with Sexton, who at that time was the driver of the "Kurrawang," that he should leave two hours later, and take on water and stores to distribute among the 41 Mile. The "Kurrawang" should have crossed the "Sadie" at the 41 Mile, but upon arrival there it was found, that two of the "Sadie's" waggons had got off the line in shunting. It took four or five hours to get them on again. Meanwhile the "'Kurrawang" went into the bush and delivered stores and water, and came back to the 41 Mile, where it was seen that the "Sadie" was ready to start for Kurrawang. It was arranged that both engines should come in together. The 'Kurrawang" was in front, and the "Sadie" in the middle when they started, and they came that way until they reached the 33 Mile, where there was a siding. The train shunted at that point, and the "Sadie," with 10 trucks in front of her, took the lead. The 19 trucks were loaded with wood. Then came four water tank wagons, and then the "Kurrawang." Immediately behind the latter were nine water tanks and 35 trucks of wood. After them came two Government wagons. The guard (Thomas Brown) fixed the train up. They came straight through to the 14-Mile hill, where the train stopped, according to the usual custom, to enable the guard to examine the "boxes." At that place there was also a telephone box to notify Kurrawang of' the departure of any train. Witness rode on the "Kurrawang" to the 14 mile, where he walked to the telephone box and telephoned the probable departure of the train for Kurrawang in a few minutes. He then walked to the engine and jumped on the "Sadie." The deceased Newby, Driver Sexton, Guard Thomas Brown and witness were on the "Sadie." On starting the couplings broke.

To the Jury: We presume they broke at the 14-Mile.

The witness, proceeding, said they presumed that the 12 leading wagons ahead of the "Sadie" broke away. The guard examined the train to see that the couplings were all right at the 14 Mile. They ran a distance of seven miles. The first four miles of their journey was a steep down grade. The remaining three miles were slightly undulating. The plan (produced) was correct. When the "Sadie" got down seven miles from the top of the 14 Mile hill the two engines were steaming along. Witness noticed a fire ahead with a man standing alongside. Witness looked round the side of the engine to see what was the matter with him. Immediately after there was a crash. It was not a place where they would expect to see a fire as a signal to stop to pick up a passenger, as there were no camps in the vicinity.

When the crash took place witness, to avoid the trucks coming on top of him, climbed on top of the boiler of the engine. He was partly slung off from there and partly threw himself off. He got clear of the wreckage, and saw Brown, the guard, and Tovey, the fireman. Newby, the other fireman, was pinned against the boiler. It took between half an hour and an hour to get Sexton out from among the wreckage. Immediately after the accident some men, who were camped 30 or 40 chains closer to Kurrawang, came down to render assistance, and one of them. (Thomas Dyke) went to Kurrawang for assistance. After getting Sexton out they endeavored to get Newby out. They found it impossible to do so. Newby died about 11 o'clock that night. Three hours after the accident a relief train came with a gang of about 20 men. The men were also unable to extricate Newby. They all continued working till about 2 o'clock the following morning. They then went into Kurrawang. At daylight they returned with a large gang of men, and made a deviation round the side of the smashup to take around another engine with which to pull the wreckage away that jammed deceased. The gang worked till 7 o'clock that night before he was released, after which he was brought to Kurrawang.

To the Coroner: It was customary to have loaded trucks ahead of an engine. The fact that loaded trucks were ahead, and that they might interfere with an engine-driver's view, made very little difference, especially in the night time. They would prevent him seeing some class of obstacles. It

was customary to have firewood stacked up on the tender of an engine. Fettlers were kept continuously on the line. He attributed the wagons breaking away to faulty couplings. These couplings were produced. Portions of the chopper produced were seen by the coroner and jury on their visit to the place. Another chopper in the court was found to have a flaw in it. To its breaking he attributed the accident. Beforehand the flaw could not have been detected.

To the Jury: It was the usual custom for a guard to ride on the engine, so that he could get buckets of water to extinguish fires in trucks, caused by sparks from the engine. The rate of speed at the time was 10 to 12 miles an hour. It was the usual speed there. Sometimes the men on the trains worked seven and eight, and on occasions up to 13 hours or more. The driver and firemen of the "Sadie" were perfectly sober. He had not seen the trucks break away from the 14-mile.

To Mr. Hall: The "Sadie" left Kurrawang that morning about 7.30 or 7.45. She left the 41-Mile at 5.45, and arrived at the 14 Mile about 8 o'clock. They stopped about 10 minutes. The accident happened between 8 and 8.30 o'clock. The chopper broke away. They only presumed the trucks broke away from the 14 Mile. The broken chopper was in court. It was found beside the axle. It did not necessarily follow that the chopper would be found at the point where it had broken out. There was no light on the leading truck, although it was the rule to have one. On that day the "Sadie" was expected back at 3 o'clock, so that the guard had not taken a light. Had there been a light they would have noticed the trucks break away. It was a safe thing to have the trucks in front of an engine. The Government travelled their trucks ahead of the engine from Golden Gate to the mines. There was a regulation against the practice on Government main lines. The Government ran two engines sometimes on one train. He confessed there was an element of danger in the practice, although not much more risk was attached to it. The guard was responsible for the making up of a train. Witness made no objection to the way it was made up. It was the usual thing to have a single engine in the middle of a train. In view of after events, it would have been safer not to have had two engines in the centre of the train. They had hauled 80 trucks with one engine. It was safe. The grades on the Kurrawang line were more suitable for such loads than the grades on the Government lines. Henry Sexton was a qualified engine-driver, holding a locomotive certificate. So did Simpson, the driver of the "Kurrawang." Sexton was now in the hospital, and Simpson was suffering from congestion of the lungs. At the 14 Mile Newby examined the front portions of the train and Brown the rear portion. Witness heard Newby tell Brown that the couplings and boxes were all right, The "Kurrawang" crashed through water tanks, tilted up the tender of the "Sadie," and jammed Newby between the brake gear and fire-box. There was short wood on the tender. The fire he had seen ahead of them on looking from the side of the engine was 2oft. from the line. A leading light on the truck might have obviated the accident. Not having a light on the leading, truck, the men on the engine had no means of knowing whether the trucks were on the train or not.

To Mr. Phillips: The company's trucks were new stock. It was the custom on timber lines in West Australia to run trucks ahead of the engine. Owing to the two trucks going off the line, the "Sadie" was prevented from getting home by daylight. Obstructions were not known on the line. Had anything been wrong with the line itself the fettlers would have reported the matter.

Guard William Brown gave corroborating evidence.

The court at this stage adjourned till 3 o'clock.

AFTERNOON PROCEEDINGS.
Sworn statements of the drivers was entered and evidence was given by various other witnesses. All corroborated the foregoing.

VERDICT OF THE .JURY.

The jury, who retired to consider their verdict, came back to court with the following finding: "That Thomas Richard Newby, on April 20, came to his death accidentally, caused by defective couplings, which could not be detected on examination. The jury consider that the practice of having trucks in front of engines is a most reprehensible one, and also that lights should be always carried in the event of their being required. The jury think that some, recognition should be made of Charles Dyke, who ran to summon the relief train. The jury consider the witness Wilson showed great callousness in not attempting to release the two men who were pinned on the "Sadie"

Source: *Trove/Kalgoorlie Western Argus (WA)* Tuesday 8 May 1906 Pages 27 and 28.