

[CORONER.]



INQUISITION

COUNTY
OF
CARIBOO.

IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH
OF KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE.

An Inquisition indented taken at **BRALORNE**

British Columbia, the **TWELFTH** day of **OCTOBER**, in
the **NINTH** year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord the King, before
me, **HERBERT ASHBY**, gentleman, one of the Coroners for
our Lord the King, for the **COUNTY OF CARIBOO** aforesaid, upon the view of the
body of **KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE**, then and there and
within the jurisdiction of the said Coroner, lying dead, upon the oaths of

JAMES WARRINGTON, Foreman.
LESLIE CARLISLE MUIR.
SAMUEL ARCHIBALD MUIR.
ADAM GARLISKI.
LAWRENCE CHAMBERS.
WILLIAM WAITE.
JOHN DOHERTY.

NOTARY PUBLIC'S DEPT.

NOV 1 1945

good and lawful men of **BRALORNE**, aforesaid, in the
said **COUNTY OF CARIBOO**, who being now here sworn
and charged to inquire, on the part of our said Lord the King, when, where, how, and after what manner,
the said **KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE** came to his death,
do say upon their oath, that

ENTERED

We find the deceased came to
his death ^{by} ~~accidental~~ ~~death~~ with no
blame attached to anyone.

2
We ~~Recommend~~ the jury recommend
that markers be put up at
all dangerous or soft parts
on road.

Also that loads of men be
limited to 15 on this type of
veter car.

\$37.50
C. J. Brown (P.M.) \$15.00
A. S. S. Humphrey (P.M.) 10.00
Nov. 2/15

IN WITNESS whereof, as well the aforesaid Coroner as the Jurors aforesaid, have to this Inquisition,
put their seals, on the day and year and at the place first above mentioned.

James Warrington
Edem Garlinahi
John Doherty
LC Muir
Wm Dair
SA Muir
L. Chambers.

H. Ashby

Coroner.

[CORONER.]



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H86

INQUISITION

COUNTY
OF
CARIBOO

IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH
OF SATARO MATSUMURA.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEPT.

RECEIVED

BRALORNE

NOV 1 1945

An Inquisition indented taken at

British Columbia, the TWELFTH day of OCTOBER, in
the NINTH year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord the King, before
me, HERBERT ASHBY, gentleman, one of the Coroners for
our Lord the King, for the COUNTY OF CARIBOO aforesaid, upon the view of the
body of SATARO MATSUMURA, then and there and
within the jurisdiction of the said Coroner, lying dead, upon the oaths of

JAMES WARRINGTON. Foreman.
LESLIE CARLISLE MUIR.
SAMUEL ARCHIBALD MUIR.
ADAM GARLISKI.
LAWRENCE CHAMBERS.
WILLIAM WAITE.
JOHN DOHERTY.

good and lawful men of

BRALORNE

said

COUNTY OF CARIBOO

and charged to inquire, on the part of our said Lord the King, when, where, how, and after what manner,

the said

SATARO MATSUMURA

came to his death,

do say upon their oath, that

ENTERED

we find the deceased came
to his death by accident
with no blame attached
to anyone. 5

be the jury recommended that
markers be put up at all
dangerous or soft parts of the
road.

Also that loads of 15 men
be limited on this type of
car.

IN WITNESS whereof, as well the aforesaid Coroner as the Jurors aforesaid, have to this Inquisition,
put their seals, on the day and year and at the place first above mentioned.

James Warring to.

Adam Garlinski

John Doherty

LC Muir

Wm D aite

SA Muir

L. b Chambers

H. Ashby

Coroner.

True North



HILLSIDE @ 38°

A

HIGHWAY

70'

34'

CRACK IN ROAD SURFACE

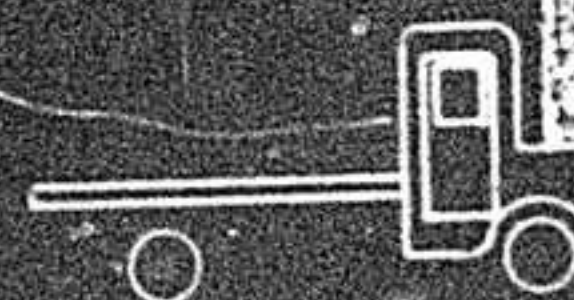
APPROXIMATE PATH OF RIGHT WHEELS

Stump flush with road

Soft Shoulder

ROCK FILL

LOG



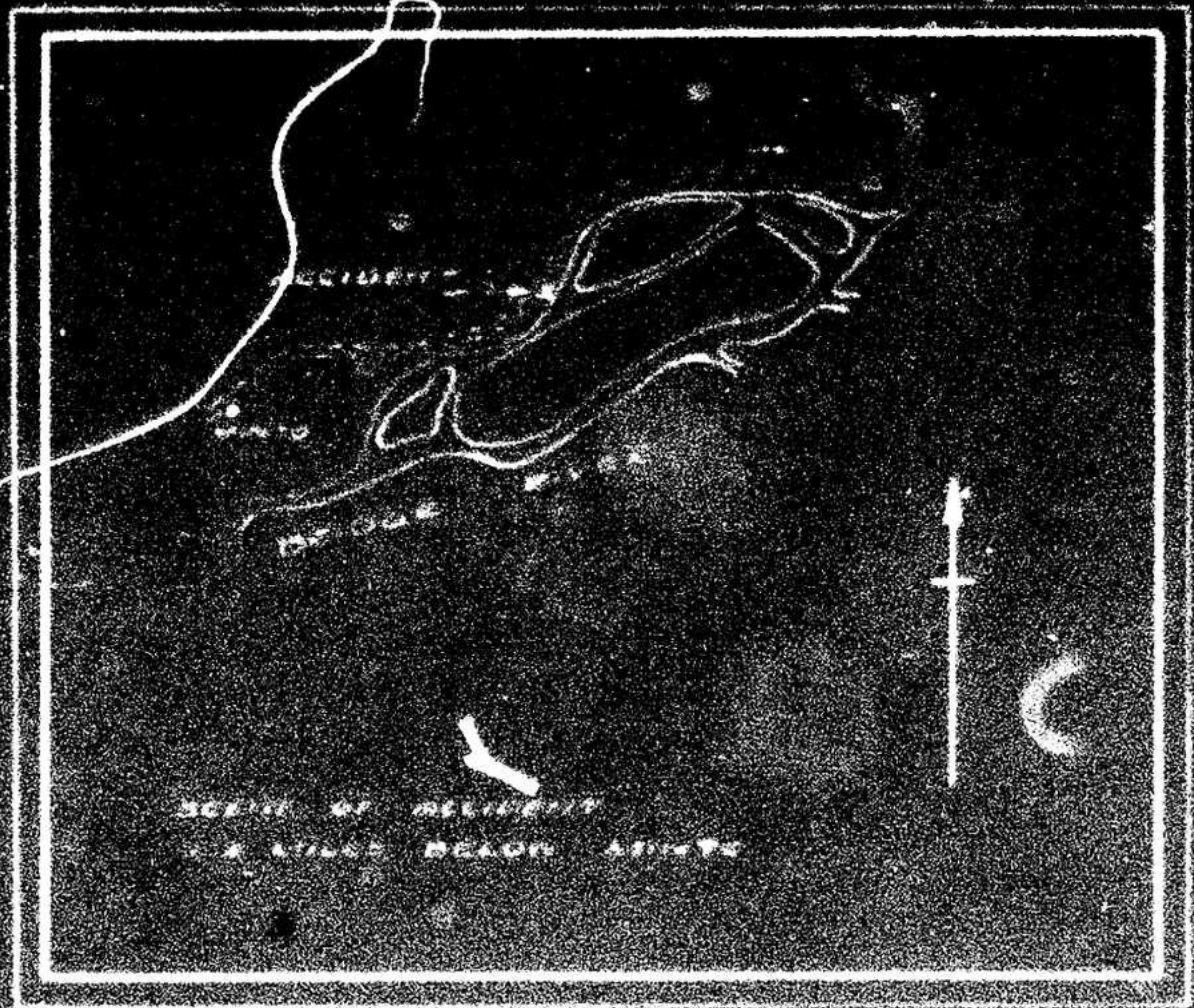
TRUCK

RIVER FLAT

RIVER

A

SECTION A-A



SCENE OF FATAL
ACCIDENT OCCURRING
OCT. 3 '45 at approx 7:15 AM
10
OCT 3 '45
345



Information of Witnesses.

CANADA: }
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. }

IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATHS OF
SATARO MATSUMURA & KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE.

County of Cariboo.

To Wit:

INFORMATIONS of witnesses severally taken and acknowledged on behalf of our Sovereign
Lord the King, touching the death of SATARO MATSUMURA & KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE
at Bralorne, in the of
in the County of Cariboo, on the twelfth day
of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty five
before me, Herbert Ashby, one of His
Majesty's Coroners for the said County, on an Inquisition then and there taken on view of the body
of the said SATARO MATSUMURA & KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE, then and there lying dead, as
follows, to wit:

Dr J. Brown, M.D.
Swanston Gibson, Mining Engineer.
George S. Blake, Truck driver.
Victor Morris Bryant, Truck driver.
Shintaro Yamashita, Truck driver.
Etsuji Morii, Community Chairman, Minto Japanese Community.
Fukuichio Suenaga, Logger.
Tatsumi Iwasa, Mill foreman.
John Macklin Deane, Constable, B.C. Provincial Police,
of the of Bralorne and Minto, in the said County

of Cariboo, being sworn, saith,

Dr. John Brown, Bralorne, B. C., on being sworn, said:-

Coroner : You were called on the morning of October 9th to attend an accident?

A. Yes

Q. At about what time?

A. About 7:40 a.m.

Q. You proceeded to the scene of the accident?

A. I arrived there about 8:30 a.m.

Q. Will you tell the jury just what you found?

A. When I arrived on the scene of the accident I found a large wood truck lying on its side about 30 feet or so down a steep bank. A few feet away from the truck I found the body of a man who was Japanese and who was quite dead. He had been dead for some little time before I arrived. He was lying about eight or ten feet away from the truck. Examination showed a very severe crushing of the chest which would damage his lungs and heart and was sufficient to cause immediate death.

Q. Did you ascertain the name of the man?

A. I have his name but cannot pronounce it.

Q. Katsujiro Minamide was the name?

A. Yes.

Q. He was removed to the mortuary at Bralorne?

A. The body was removed to Bralorne.

Q. Subsequently, Doctor, one of the injured men died in the Bralorne Hospital. What was his name? Was it Sataro Matsumura?

A. Yes. I saw him at the Minto Hotel, not where the accident occurred. He was taken up about a mile or a mile and a half and examined there. Then I saw signs of a broken neck with paralysis and loss of sensation. The condition was an extremely serious one and I had him removed to Bralorne Hospital where he died the following day at 2:30 p.m. The temperature was 107. X-Ray confirmed the diagnosis of broken neck.

Q. Just for the record, Doctor, what are your degrees?

A. M.D., C.M.

Juryman : How was the second man removed to Minto?

Coroner : We will try and find out as we go along. He was already there when the doctor arrived.

Swanston Gibson, on being sworn, said:

Coroner : What is your name?

A. Swanston Gibson.

Q. Your occupation?

A. Mining Engineer.

Q. You were requested to make a drawing of the scene of an accident on October 9th in which two Japanese lost their lives.

A. That is right.

Q. You have that drawing with you?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you certify that this is a true and correct representation of the scene of the accident where the men lost their lives?

A. I do.

The drawing was entered as "Exhibit A".

On the Coroner's instruction, Mr. Gibson gave two copies of the drawing to the jury and gave a detailed explanation of the drawing to the jury.

Coroner : This stump you have marked here was down level with the road?

Mr. Gibson : Yes. Flush with the road.

Q. Did that stump go way down in the road?

A. Yes.

George S. Blake, on being sworn, said:

Coroner : What is your full name?

A. George S. Blake.

Q. Occupation?

A. Truck driver.

Q. For whom do you work?

A. Neal Evans Transportation Company.

Q. On October 9th were you on the Bridge River Highway?

A. Yes.

Q. Enroute to Bralorne?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you meet any truck on the road?

A. Yes.

Q. At what place?

A. Just before I got to Minto Mines.

Q. How far?

A. I suppose a quarter of a mile.

Q. At what time did you meet the truck?

A. I would say about ten after seven.

Q. Did you pass him all right?

A. Yes sir.

Q. You didn't touch him at all?

A. No sir.

Q. Was he still travelling on the road when you last saw him?

A. To the best of my knowledge he was. When I passed him I pulled into the side. It wasn't a dangerous place to pass. I caught a view of the men on the truck.

Q. How many in the truck?

A. 14 or 16 that I could see. 17

Q. Have you any idea of the width of the travel highway at the point you passed?

A. I would say about twenty feet.

Q. How fast were you going?

A. About 15 miles an hour when I caught sight of them.

Q. How far away from the other truck when you first saw them?

A. On the highway where the accident occurred there is a corner and they had just come around that corner. I would say about 400 feet.

Q. You could see them about 100 yards?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you any idea what speed the other truck was travelling?

A. I couldn't say. The dust was flying.

Q. You have passed that place since then.

A. Yes sir.

Q. You have seen the truck?

A. Yes sir.

Q. From the point where you passed that truck on the morning of the accident, how far is it to where it is now lying?

A. Mr. Deane and I were down there and I showed him the place where I figured I passed him and I measured it and it was 135 feet from where I passed him.

Q. It was 135 feet from where you passed him?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you first know there had been an accident?

A. I heard there had been an accident when I was at B.R. Meats. A light delivery drove in and we were commenting on the mail truck being late and wondering what the trouble was. The Japanese from the light delivery came in and they said one of their trucks had hit one of our trucks though nothing was said about a serious accident. I stopped and unloaded some stuff at Congress and Bert Marchant came up to me and told me about the accident at Goldbridge.

Q. You are quite sure you did not touch that truck?

A. Definitely.

Q. Was your truck examined for marks?

A. Mr. Dean examined it the day of the accident.

Juryman : How far behind you was the mail truck?

A. About three minutes or so.

Constable Deane: When you saw the truck in the rear view mirror were there any people standing on the back?

A. All I could see was just a flash and I know there were men in the back of the truck.

Q. Was the sun shining at that particular time?

A. I don't know whether it was shining there. On the way up the sun would shine occasionally. I do not think the sun shines on that place.

Q. Did you have any difficulty seeing through the dust? Was there much dust ahead of you?

A. No, not very much. My dust would have bothered them.

Q. Would you say this man was driving along the shoulder when you met him and he pulled out and gave you too much of the road?

A. I couldn't say.

Q. How wide is the body of your truck?

A. About seven feet. Very narrow body. It would take 3 widths of a barrel. Most trucks take four.

Victor Morris Bryant, on being sworn, said:

Coroner : Your full name?

A. Victor Morris Bryant.

Q. Occupation?

A. Truck driver.

Q. You are employed by the Evans Transportation Company?

A. That is right.

Q. On the morning of October 9th were you driving the mail truck on the Bridge River Highway?

A. Yes.

Q. Before reaching Minto Mines did you see a truck in the ditch?

A. Yes.

Q. Were there many people around it?

A. Four or five on the road and quite a few scattered in the bush around the truck.

Q. When you saw this, what did you do?

A. I first saw the four or five on the road. Some were bloody. I stopped and down the road I could see the truck with the rest of the Japanese scattered in the bush. Some were quite bloody and seemed to be quite dazed. I went down to the truck to see if there was anybody badly injured and there were several pinned under the truck. Somebody suggested I hook my truck to the other truck and pull it off the Japanese. I didn't want to as I could see it would probably mutilate the ones underneath.

Q. What did you do?

A. I went and got a jack and put it under the truck and started to jack it up. Bert Marchant came along and we were able to jack it up.

Q. After you jacked it up you took the body out, do you recollect?

A. We took out two or three and the one who was dead we took out last.

Q. Did you know this man was dead?

A. No. I took him out and felt his pulse and started to give artificial respiration but his body was in bad condition and I thought it would do more harm than good so I stopped.

Q. Did any of the people around the truck say anything to the effect that an Evans truck had hit them.

A. No. Somebody did say that one had passed them. Some of them did not know whether I was the truck or not.

Q. Did anybody come from up the road to help when you were there?

A. Just Bert Marchant.

Q. I mean from the Minto side.

A. There was a truck on the road but whether anybody came down to help or not I couldn't say.

Q. Could you estimate the number of men gathered around?

A. Offhand I would say thirty. 14

Q. After you rendered what first aid you could you continued on your journey?

A. They didn't know whether they had got the phone message through. I went down to Minto store and found they had.

Q. Who made the telephone call?

A. I do not know.

Constable Champion, R.C.M.P. : Japanese are not allowed to use the phone.

Coroner : The evidence shows very little time was lost in getting the message through.

Coroner : The 30 men there. Some may have got out by truck from Minto?

Mr. Bryant : I was the only truck on the road so there couldn't have been any from Minto but there was a truck on the road after I had gone back to my truck the third time.

Constable Deane : About how long do you estimate you were behind the first truck?

A. About five minutes.

Q. Nothing like a half hour?

A. No.

Q. Whereabouts under the truck was the body of this man lying?

A. Near the rear wheel.

Q. Was the head towards the river and was he on his face?

A. On his face and head towards the river. The rack was on his body and another man's leg across his body.

Q. What part of the truck was touching him?

A. The rack.

Q. Were there some 2" x 12" planks? Were they underneath?

A. They were touching him.

Q. You say the head was toward the river?

A. That's right.

Arthur Nishi Guchi, Interpreter, was duly sworn.

Shintaro Yamashita, on being sworn, gave evidence in Japanese which was translated into English by the interpreter.

Coroner : The name is Shintaro Yamashita?

A. Yes sir.

Q. What is your occupation?

A. Before the war or at present?

Q. Present.

A. Truck driver.

Q. On the morning of October 9th were you driving a truck?

A. Yes.

Q. When you climbed out what did you see?

A. I went down and saw numerous people sprawling all over and I attempted to rescue them as much as I could but my neck was twisted and I couldn't straighten up at the time.

Q. Did you see Minamide, the man who was killed?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where was he?

A. He was towards the back end of the truck, or I should say around the back wheel.

Q. Did you see Sataro Matsumura?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where was he?

A. I think he was fourth man from Mr. Minamide.

Q. They were all pinned underneath?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Were there seats on the rack of the truck?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Were they fastened down?

A. The side of the truck was bolted down but not the seats.

Q. The seats were loose?

A. There were three seats and they were placed in the truck tightly.

Q. Were you ever instructed to make these seats fast?

A. No sir.

Q. Do you have a chauffeur's license?

A. I have just a driver's license.

Q. Driving a commercial vehicle without a chauffeur's license?

A. Yes sir. It wasn't very long since I started to drive that particular truck.

Q. On whose instructions were you driving the truck?

A. From the mill foreman.

Q. Was the mill foreman aware that you had no commercial license?

A. Possibly he did not know.

Q. Who was the mill foreman?

A. Mr. Iwasa.

Q. Do you know who owns the truck?

A. Registered in the name of Mr. E. Morii. I drove it in from Vancouver myself.

Q. When you were transporting men did you have a tail gate on the truck?

A. No sir.

Q. Do you believe you were very close to the edge when you passed the other truck?

A. No sir. I was a safe distance from the edge.

Q. How wide is this truck?

A. I just cannot say because I never measured it.

Q. To drive the men to the mill?

A. Yes.

Q. How many men were on that truck? 16

A. I cannot say because I had my motor running in order to warm it up and I was in the cab and when the signal was given to proceed I started to drive.

Q. Are you in the habit of carrying passengers?

A. Yes sir, although it is not very long.

Q. On whose authority and on whose instructions were you ordered to carry these men?

A. I was instructed by the company.

Q. Which company?

A. The firm of the Devine Lumber.

Q. On the day in question on which the accident occurred did you meet an Evans truck on the road?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you pass it safely?

A. Yes. It was quite safe when we passed each other.

Q. After passing the Evans truck how far was it before you went into the ditch?

A. I should imagine the length of two or three trucks.

Q. What caused you to go off the road?

A. I do not know. To the best of my knowledge I believe the road was alright, quite level.

Q. Did the truck get out of control?

A. As soon as I passed the truck I attempted to get on the centre driveway portion of the road and I had my steering gradually towards the left but without responding. I felt the front end jerking and started going down.

Q. Did you see anything after the accident which gave you any reason to show why the truck went off the road?

A. After the accident I returned to the scene with the officer. Upon investigating the spot I noticed a stump, level with the road, which I did not see at the time of the accident, and beyond that about three feet was caved in to the right and I believe that is the cause of the truck swerving into the bottom.

Q. Did you definitely drive over the top of this stump?

A. I cannot say, sir.

Q. When this accident occurred do you recall how many times your truck turned over?

A. I cannot say definitely but I remember the truck turned over once and then I heard a big bang.

Q. Were you still in the cab when the truck came to a rest?

A. Yes. I was in the cab, my face was straight up and down and another man was right on top of me.

Q. How did you get out?

A. I asked the man on top of me if he was hurt. He told me he was not and I asked him to open the door but he did not know how. I asked him to move over and I reached over and turned down the glass and climbed out.

Constable Champion, R.C.M.P. : Were you the owner and operator of a taxi in Vancouver.

A. Yes sir.

Q. How many cabs?

A. Five cabs and two U-Drives.

Q. You have been driving how many years?

A. I have driven since 1912.

Mr. Rendle - (Workmen's Compensation Board) : Is Mr. Iwasa mill foreman for Devine Lumber Company?

A. He is the man who gives the instructions.

Q. He is the boss?

A. Yes

Q. Was there a wood rack on the truck?

A. It is a wooden side with iron clamps on with a hook.

Q. Dump truck?

A. No.

Q. How large is the body of the truck? How wide and how long?

A. I am not sure.

Q. There are three planks to sit on?

A. Three planks are fastened together in an "H" shape arrangement.

Q. How many passengers in the cab?

A. One. Two in the cab altogether.

Court was adjourned from 12:10 p.m. until 1:10 p.m. for lunch.

Mr. Etsuji Morii, on being sworn, gave evidence in Japanese which was translated into English by the interpreter.

Coroner : Your name?

A. Etsuji Morii.

Q. What is your position in the Japanese community?

A. I am authorised and am looking after the Japanese interests. President or Chairman of the community.

Q. You direct the affairs of the Minto community?

A. Yes. That is correct.

Q. You are the owner of a truck that was involved in the accident on October 9th.

A. That is right.

Q. The use of that truck. Is that under your direction?

A. No sir. That truck was placed at the disposal of the company.

Q. When you speak of the company? What Company?

A. The Tyax Sawmills.

Q. Is the truck placed at the disposal of the Bridge River Sawmills or is it a Japanese company.

A. To the sawmill.

Q. But you still don't tell me what sawmill. Your community is working at the sawmill, that is correct?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Are they working for themselves or for Mr. Devine of the Bridge River Sawmills?

A. Working for Mr. Devine.

Q. Was Shintaro Yamashita driving that truck under your orders?

A. No sir.

Q. Were you aware that this man was driving?

A. Yes.

Q. You knew he did not have a chauffeur's license?

A. I did not know, sir.

Q. Do you know how many men were on the truck in question on the morning of the accident?

A. I did not know at the time.

Q. Did you see the truck leave Minto?

A. No sir, I didn't.

Q. Are you aware of the fact that the police had required certain alterations made on the body of the truck - - the rack?

A. I did not know.

Q. Did you go to the scene of the accident on the morning of October 9th?

A. I didn't go.

Q. What action did you take when you received word? Did you send any help?

A. I was attending to the telephone call for the Doctor.

Juryman : These alterations you mention. Just what changes were to be made?

Coroner : It was in regard to the seating accommodation.

Juryman : If he was the owner of the truck, shouldn't he have been notified of the changes to be made?

Coroner : That is what I am trying to bring out. It will be in the evidence later.

Mr. Rendle : Was the sawmill or Devine Lumber paying any rental for that truck?

Mr. Morii : Not a cent, sir.

Mr. Fukuichio Suenaga, on being sworn, gave evidence in Japanese which was translated into English by the interpreter.

Coroner : What is your occupation?

A. Logger.

Q. When you left for work on the morning of October 9th did you ride on the truck?

A. Yes sir.

Q. What part of the truck?

A. I was riding at the right hand side of the driver.

Q. In the cab?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Do you remember passing any truck on the road?

A. Yes.

Q. What speed were you going when you passed? Any idea?

A. I cannot say how many miles per hour he was going very well.

Q. Did you appear to be on the solid road after you passed?

A. Until we passed the truck it seemed to be on the solid road.

Q. After you passed?

A. Shortly after passing the other truck I felt the ground give way and my side was going down.

Q. Did the driver stop the truck?

A. The driver was going slowly at the time of passing the other truck and just about the same slowness trying to get on the left hand side but just at that time the ground gave way towards the right hand side.

Q. Did the driver apply the brakes or did he keep on going?

A. I never had a chance to notice whether he had the brakes on or not as we went so suddenly.

Q. How many times did the truck turn over?

A. I cannot say. I do not remember.

Q. Do you know how many men were on that truck with you that morning?

A. I have no recollection about the number.

Q. When you got out of the cab how many of your fellow passengers were pinned under the truck?

A. Three persons were pinned underneath.

Q. Did you recognise Sataro Matsumura?

A. Yes.

Q. And Katsufiro Minamide?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Minamide dead?

A. I cannot say whether he was dead or not.

Q. Did you help move Minamide?

A. I was sitting down and I was kind of watching but unable to give any assistance.

Tatsumi Iwasa, on being sworn, gave evidence without the aid of the interpreter.

Coroner : Your full name?

A. Tatsumi Iwasa.

Q. Your occupation?

A. Mill foreman

Q. You reside at Minto?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have charge of the operation of the truck that was involved in the accident on October 9th?

A. Partly. //

Q. Just what do you mean by partly?

A. When it is in the mill. ←

Q. Do you tell the men who is to drive the truck?

A. We do not change the drivers.

Q. This man Yamashita did not drive the truck all the time?

A. Yes.

Q. How long is that?

A. I cannot say exactly.

Q. Approximately?

A. Last two or three months.

Q. You left Minto with this truck on the morning of the accident?

A. Yes.

Q. How many men on the truck?

A. Between twenty and thirty.

Q. Yamashita was driving with your authority? You gave him the job?

A. No.

Q. Whose responsibility was it to see that your truck drivers are properly licensed?

A. I do not know.

Q. This truck was the property of your community?

A. I do not know that?

Q. Were you aware, Mr. Iwasa, that your truck driver had no chauffeur's license?

A. No.

Q. You were aware that this is required?

A. Yes.

Q. You didn't make it your business?

A. I thought he had one.

Q. What part of the truck were you riding on?

A. On the right hand side.

Q. Just exactly what happened?

A. I do not remember very much. I just saw the dust as we passed Evans truck, I presume it was Evans. The next thing I knew we started to turn over and until I came to I don't remember.

Q. You were knocked out?

A. Yes.

Q. Whereabouts were you when you came to?

A. As far as I can remember I was on top of several other fellows but I do not know who.

Q. Were you clear of the truck?

A. Yes.

Q. After you came to did you see Minamide, the man who was killed?

A. Yes.

Q. Whereabouts was he? Had he been moved or was he still pinned under the truck?

A. Still under the truck.

Q. Matsumura?

A. Still under the truck.

Q. Do you know who took the word to get help or how they got the message through?

A. I do not know at the moment.

Q. As foreman at the mill and having charge of the operation of these trucks did you know of any time that your community was told to have the seating arrangements fixed on the truck?

A. I just heard about seats on the truck.

Q. When did you hear that?

A. I cannot say.

Q. Would it be last month, do you think?

A. I think it was last month.

Q. Did you know what you were required to do in regard to fixing up the seating accommodation? What representations were made to your people?

A. No.

Q. You know who gave the driver the job?

A. Yes.

Q. Who was it? Did Mr. Morii give him the job?

A. I presume so.

Constable Champion : That was a community truck in the accident? It used to be at Bridge River?

A. Yes, that is the truck.

Mr. Rendle : Are there any of the men living at the sawmill?

A. No.

Q. Then you should be able to fix the number of the men in the truck a little closer than 20 or 30. Do some of them go in other trucks?

A. I cannot say very well. If any are left behind they are picked up.

Q. Would there be twenty-five?

A. There might have been 25 on there.

Q. How many men at the mill?

A. Twenty-two including the engineer and cat man.

Q. Have you got a first aid man?

A. Yes.

Q. First aid room and equipment?

A. Yes.

Q. Was there anybody on the truck who gave any first aid?

A. I am the first aid man.

Q. Industrial Certificate?

A. Yes..

Constable Champion : Do you know if Yamashita has ever applied for a chauffeur's license since he has been at Minto?

A. No.

Constable Dean : How many usually travel back and forth on that particular truck?

A. Approximately 8 or 12, sometimes 10.

Q. And yet this day there were 20 or 30?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the explanation?

A. I used to ride on the dump truck before they blew the gasket out of it and it was out of commission.

Q. Who gave the word when the truck was loaded and ready to start?

A. No orders were given. He usually leaves around seven o'clock and when time comes he starts off if there is nobody coming.

Q. Nobody told him they were all on?

A. Some of the boys in the truck may have told him to go ahead.

Q. At the time of the accident were you sitting down?

A. Yes.

Q. Was anybody standing?

A. Not as far as I know.

Q. Were they all sitting on the seats along the sides?

A. Some were in the middle.

Q. Where was Minamide sitting?

A. I do not know.

Q. Matsumura?

A. I do not know.

Constable Champion : You take two or three trucks usually? You usually have more than one truck?

A. Yes.

Shintaro Yamashita was recalled and gave further evidence through the interpreter.

Constable Champion : Did you ever apply for a chauffeur's license? Did you think you were carrying through the license that you had in Vancouver?

A. I was attempting to get a chauffeur's license but I didn't have a chance.

Q. You have driven your own ambulance out to Kamloops and back?

A. Yes sir.

Constable Deane: What year did you last have a chauffeur's license?

A. About 10 years ago.

Q. What class?

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A. It was just known as a chauffeur's license then.

Q. There are three classes - - A, B and C.

A. I haven't had one since A, B and C classes in effect.

Q. You say someone told you it was alright to go. Who said that?

A. The people at the back when ready would bang on the cab showing it is O.K.

Q. Who put you on that particular job?

A. I believe Mr. Iwasa instructed me.

Wickham 4 pages back

Q. He put you on the truck driving job definitely?

A. Yes.

Constable Deane, on being sworn, said:-

Coroner : What is your full name?

A. John Macklin Deane.

Q. Constable in the British Columbia Police?

A. Constable in the British Columbia Provincial Police, stationed at Bralorne, in the County of Cariboo.

Q. You were notified of a driving accident on the 9th of October?

A. At 35 minutes after seven on the morning of October 9th, 1945, I received a telephone call which was identified by B.R. Meats, Minto, stating that an accident had occurred to a truck between Minto and the Tyax Sawmill, several men were injured, some seriously and some were still pinned under the truck. I immediately notified Dr. J. Brown in Bralorne and asked for the company ambulance (Bralorne). I arrived at the scene of the accident at the same time as the doctor, which was at 8:30 a.m. I found a Chev truck bearing 1945 British Columbia License No. CJ-870 on its side at the bottom of a bank leading from the road to the river. It would be on the East side of the road. Minamide was lying between the truck and the river, approximately 20 feet from the truck. The doctor made an examination and pronounced him dead. The body was removed to the road, thence to the morgue at Bralorne. The Coroner was notified. I examined the truck and found that it had made what appeared to be a 1-3/4 turn after having left the road. It was lying on its left side with the left front wheel resting on a log which was lying at right angles to the road. The left side of the engine hood was crushed in. The right side was not. The right front fender had a slight dent on its outside edge but I am unable to say whether this was fresh or not. The top of the cab and both corners were badly dented and a complete stump was resting against the top of the cab. I checked the steering gear and found that it appeared to be quite firm. No movement could be detected in the steering wheel. All tires were in order. Running gear such as cables, brakes, appeared in order. It was impossible to see whether anything had happened prior to the accident to bend the radius rod but it seemed to be all right. On examining the road I found a stump in the shoulder, about 15 feet back of the line of the back wheel of the truck. Some tracks led across this stump but it is impossible to say whether these tracks belonged to the wrecked truck or to another which had reportedly passed that way in order to go to the mill for first aid equipment. The tracks which could be seen apparently went back up onto the road. The stump was about 18" in diameter and some of the outside had broken away but the tracks leading across it had definitely lifted to go over it. Immediately North of the stump the road was broken away and a path had been made down to the wreck. On the 17th of September, 1945, on receiving instructions from my own headquarters, I inspected this particular truck because they were supposed to be carrying passengers on it. I found that the seats were constructed of one 2 x 12 plank attached to uprights which fitted into metal loops. Three seats were provided - one across the front and one down each side. These seats were approximately six inches high. The seats were loose and both sides

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could easily be removed without taking any keys out. I endeavored at that time to see the owner of this truck, Mr. Mori, but he was in Kamloops with a party of other Japanese who had gone over concerning some man who had just died in Tranquille Sanatorium. Failing him I inspected the truck accompanied by S. Furukawa, secretary of the Japanese group at Minto and instructed him to have the seats raised at least another 12 inches and keyed in such a way that they would not jump out. I also instructed him to have keyed bolts dropped through the ends of the seats so they could not jump around in the truck. I was advised at that time that one man drove this truck. He had just come back from the mill when I inspected it. This driver, C. Takuchi, who holds a Class "C" Chauffeur's License No. 3761, issued in 1945 in British Columbia, told me that he was the regular driver, being in control of this vehicle at all times. On inspecting the truck after the accident I found that the seats had been raised another 12 inches as requested but the keys which were supposed to be holding them had some light hooks attached to the front end. These had broken loose. Both sides were apart, one was under the truck and the other was off to one side where Minamide was lying on it. The sides showed no signs of having been bolted down and had sustained some damage on the hillside, one being partly under the truck. The log the front wheel was resting on showed no signs of having had anything slide along it except right at the truck, a distance of approximately two feet. I questioned the driver, Shintaro Yamashita, and asked for his driver's license. He produced driver's license B.C. 1945 issue No. 30548, issued at Bralorne, B. C. He had no chauffeur's license. I questioned him as to what had happened but he had not clear picture, stating that after he had passed Evans truck and attempted to get back on the road it seemed as though something suddenly pushed the truck over the bank. I questioned both of Evans drivers. The driver of the vehicle which passed the Japanese truck just prior to the accident, which was driven by George S. Blake, 1945 driver's license No. 130852, Class "C" Chauffeur's license 2406, and I inspected the truck which he was driving. There were absolutely no signs on the truck to indicate that he had touched anything on the way. I then questioned Victor Bryant, whose evidence you have heard. I returned to the scene of the accident with George Blake at approximately 1:00 p.m. on the 10th of October and asked him to show me the approximate place where they had passed. I measured the distance from there to the stump. It was about 135 feet. Where they had passed, the road was about 17 feet wide, with rocks on the inside. In view of that 135 feet, which is only approximate, I would like to point out that at 10 miles per hour you would cover 100 feet in 6.8 seconds and 150 feet in half as much time again. At 20 miles per hour you would cover 100 feet in 3.4 seconds. 100 feet doesn't mean very much. The number of people on the truck now totals 25 excluding the driver. At 120 pounds each that is 3,000 pounds and the truck is rated at one and one half tons. 150 pounds each would be 3,750 pounds.

Coroner : What is the width of the rack?

A. Maximum width 7 feet 2 inches. Maximum length 21 feet 1 inch. The other truck is approximately the same. Both are duals.

Mr. Rendle : Could we have more evidence as to by whom they were paid and for whom they worked?

Coroner : Bridge River Sawmills.

Juryman : Would you say that truck had been altered or changed as required by law?

Constable Deane : The ⁵¹⁰⁶⁵ seats had been raised as instructed but the sides had not been bolted. The job had not been completed.

Juryman : Is the person who was told about this present?

A. No.

Q. Is the fellow who said he was driving the truck present?

A. No.

Q. When you say the road was 17 feet wide. Would the rocks on the inside narrow the surface at all?

A. We measured it to what we considered the outside edge of the road. Some vehicle had been in that far.

Q. Is the standard width of a body 7 feet 6 inches?

A. No. Eight feet.

Q. I thought that was different in the Cariboo District?

A. Standard width is not more than eight feet. The Public Utilities Commission may have laid down some rules. There was no change as far as I know.

Q. Is the road narrower where the Japanese truck passed the Evans truck?

A. It is impossible to tell where the edge had been originally. It was 14 feet in the traffic strip.

Tatsumi Iwasa was recalled.

Juryman : The driver that is driving the truck now said he had been driving two or three months. Was he driving the same truck all the time. And the driver who told the constable that he was driving on the 17th of September, what was his regular truck?

A. He was woods foreman and he was driving while men were in the truck.

Q. He is not hired as a truck driver?

A. No. He has a chauffeur's license and I have a chauffeur's license and if the driver is away we take his place.

Coroner : Yet you had Yamashita driving without a chauffeur's license?

A. I thought he had one.

Coroner : That is not a very good excuse.

Witness : I am not trying to excuse myself. I am telling the truth.

The Coroner commenced his instruction to the jury at 2:20 p.m.

*Hasbly
Coroner*

IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATHS OF
KATSUJIRO MINAMIDE AND SATARO
MATSUMURA.

of Bralorne in the County of Cariboo, in the Province of British Columbia do solemnly declare that the transcript attached hereto of the proceedings and evidence taken at the inquest held on the bodies of Katsujiro Minamide and Sataro Matsumura, formerly of Minto, B.C. is true and correct in every particular.

Declared before me at
Bralorne in the Province
of British Columbia, this
Seventeenth day of
October, A.D.1945.

Robt Humphrey

Coroner.