

A affairs of late Prof. H. G. Chapman - died 25th May 1934

Drugs Traced in Organs

DEATH OF PROFESSOR

Inquest Week After Next

VALUE OF WORK



THE LATE PROF. CHAPMAN

SYDNEY, Friday.

THE Government analyst has completed his examination of the organs removed from the body of the late Prof. H. G. Chapman, and his confidential report has been forwarded to the City Coroner.

Although the report has been sealed by the coroner, it is known that traces of two drugs were found. One of these poisons has an effect on the glands, and the other is a narcotic.

The inquest into Prof. Chapman's death will be held probably on Monday week at the City Coroner's Court.

Among the many reminiscences of Prof. Chapman it is recalled that in the course of his teaching when a professor at the Sydney University it amused him at times to offer some of his senior students exacting tests in toxicology, or a study of poisons.

Prof. Chapman, who was an expert in this branch of pharmacology, on one occasion laughingly gave some of the senior students a specimen of some substance which contained a powerful poison, and invited them to identify it.

UNABLE TO CLASSIFY IT

The toxic content or the quality of the specimen was such that even a brilliant student would not be able to classify it correctly or understand it.

An interesting comment on Prof. Chapman's administration of the funds of scientific bodies is that at least in respect of the Royal Society its reported loss of funds is probably less than the material benefits which it derived from his administration.

It was Prof. Chapman who obtained a Government grant of the land on which the science house was built. His outstanding financial ability and credit made easy the gathering of funds to erect the building which is owned by the Royal Society, and two other scientific associations, while an increase in its income and resources owed much to his direction.

Prof. Chapman was treasurer of the society for 22 years, and before the alleged loss, its accumulated funds had reached £30,000.

HINTS OF SCANDAL

Varsity Men Worried

DEATH ECHO

SYDNEY, Saturday.

Some of the most worried men in Sydney today are members of the Sydney University Senate.

Only they know why rumors and well substantiated reports against the late Prof. Henry George Chapman were hushed up. Only they know why he was not dismissed from his position as Director of Cancer Research at a salary of £2,000 when he never did any research at all.

But for the fact that Prof. Chapman's affairs came before the Bankruptcy Court it is possible that there would never have been any enquiry into his death. At first the story of his collapse and his death in hospital, were accepted in good faith, and it was only because of bankruptcy evidence that the theory of suicide arose.

Sydney specialists now believe that the poison Prof. Chapman took was an Indian drug which causes a cessation of breathing before the heart ceases to beat. It leaves no trace in the body and may be no more painful a way of committing suicide than by other poisons.

But it is not so much the fact of suicide, as the revelations threatened at the inquest, which are causing anxiety to the Senate.

The inquest is expected to open up a host of suppressed evidences, which have been simmering against Prof. Chapman for years, but which have been kept secret by the Senate and the Cancer Committee.

It is known that the vice-chancellor (Prof. Wallace) has a thick file of papers, all dealing with Prof. Chapman's administration of the cancer department, and reasons why some of his medical colleagues felt impelled to resign from that committee.

ABSENT FROM WORK

In Macquarie street are many bitter critics, who say that to avoid a university scandal the Senate hushed up evi-

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dence of startling professional misconduct by Prof. Chapman.

It is known, for instance, that since November he had not been near the university, and in three months urgent letters and telegrams have piled up for his attention. They were never even opened, and among these was a request for his resignation. Although he ignored it, the Senate took no steps to compel him to resign.

The Senate is not embarrassed by any question of cancer research funds having been tampered with. These were very strictly supervised, and all purchases had to be made by the university buying department. Evidence will be given at the inquest, however, that charges which suggest Prof. Chapman made indirect profits by recommending the purchase of inferior or higher priced equipment from certain firms.

Defalcations Cost Research Council £14,000

MELBOURNE, June 23.

A meeting of the Victorian and South Australian members of the executive committee of the Australian National Research Council was held in Melbourne tonight. The president (Sir George Julius) occupied the chair. (Sir George Julius placed before the meeting a statement of the defalcations of the arising from the treasurer (Professor W. G. Chapman), who had held office for the past eight years and before that had been the council's honorary treasurer.

Sir George Julius said it was evident that only in comparatively recent times had Professor Chapman attempted the manipulations which had led to the present position entailing a loss to the Research Council of £14,000.

AFFAIRS OF DEAD PROFESSOR

Extraordinary Disclosures
At Inquest

MISSING BONDS

SYDNEY, June 19.

Remarkable evidence concerning the late Professor Henry George Chapman, director of Cancer Research at the Sydney University, who died on May 25 in unusual circumstances, was given today when the City Coroner (Mr. H. H. Farrington) opened the inquest into the professor's death.

Henry Rupert Chapman, jackeroo, of Blackheath, son of the dead man, said that his father's life had been insured for two sums of £500 each. With bonuses the policies were worth £2,035. His father had told him that he was suffering from heart trouble.

Dr. Alan Bruce Lilley, Medical Superintendent of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, said that about 9.20 a.m. on May 25 he received a message from Mr. T. O'Brien, secretary of the Cancer Research Committee, that Professor Chapman was ill. He had the professor brought to the hospital. Carbogen was administered, and Professor Chapman immediately rallied. Carbogen was continuously applied, for as soon as it was withdrawn the patient tended to relapse. Professor Chapman was later taken to the Children's Hospital, where artificial respiration was applied. He died early in the evening.

Dr. Lilley, in answer to the coroner, said that there had been signs of narcotic poisoning. He would say that Professor Chapman died of respiratory poisoning.

Death From Narcotic Poisoning

Dr. Stratford Sheldon, Government Medical Officer, who conducted a post-mortem, and later sent the contents of the stomach to the Government Analyst, said that, in his opinion, death was due to narcotic poisoning.

Edgar Harold Booth, lecturer in physics at the Sydney University, said that, when in April he had asked Professor Chapman as honorary treasurer of the Royal Society, to have the balance-sheet prepared and audited for the annual general meeting, Professor Chapman had promised that everything would be all right. Printed copies of the balance-sheet were presented to the meeting, which Professor Chapman did not attend, but witness had subsequently been informed by Mr. Percival Minell, auditor for the society, that he (Mr. Minell) had not signed the audited balance-sheet, but that a copy had been liberated with his signature in type only to enable Professor Chapman to have copies printed. Mr. Minell had subsequently informed the witness that he had communicated with Professor Chapman in an endeavor to secure access to the bonds appearing in the balance-sheet among the assets of the Royal Society.

Absence Of Bonds

Early on the afternoon of the day on which Professor Chapman collapsed, Mr. Booth continued, he met other executive officers of the society at the head office of the Union Bank of Australia. The society's auditors and representatives of the Australian National Research Council were also present. The Royal Society's box was opened in his presence by a locksmith, and the contents checked by the auditors, by him, and two other officers. They found bonds to the nominal value of £3,940, and a few other papers of no intrinsic value. The balance-sheet had shown bonds to the nominal value of £7,200.

Alexander James Gibson, consulting engineer and honorary secretary of the Australian National Research Council, said that some difficulty had arisen regarding the payment of research workers, and, on February 6 last, he wrote to Professor Chapman, the treasurer, reminding him that a financial statement was required for

AFFAIRS OF DEAD PROFESSOR

Sensational Evidence In
Bankruptcy Court

SHORTAGE OF £3,360 ALLEGED

Thousands Mentioned
In Affidavits

SYDNEY, June 1.

Sensational evidence concerning the affairs of Professor Henry George Chapman, Director of Cancer Research at the University of Sydney, who died suddenly in his laboratory last Friday at the age of 53 years, was given before Mr. Justice Lukin in the Federal Bankruptcy Court today. A petition for the administration in bankruptcy of the estate of Professor Chapman was lodged by the Royal Society of New South Wales, and it was alleged that the estate of Chapman was indebted to the society in the sum of £3,360, and that, while Chapman was honorary treasurer of the society, he misappropriated the funds and securities of the society to the value of £3,360. Affidavits were put in, stating that, in addition to the affairs of the Royal Society there were grave complaints regarding his association, as honorary treasurer, with the National Research Council, setting out that important books were missing, and that the sum of £16,000 could not be accounted for. It was stated that Chapman had engaged in large dealings in mining and other stocks. After close investigation, the value of the deceased's assets has been put down at less than £2,000.

Estimate Of Defalcations

It is expected that the defalcations in which it is alleged Professor Chapman was involved will amount to more than £30,000, including £22,000 belonging to the Australian National Research Council and £8,000 belonging to the Royal Society.

Professor Chapman, who in 1901, was acting Professor of Physiology in the University of Adelaide, was reported last Friday to have died suddenly in his laboratory at the Sydney University, and it has been discovered since that he had been undergoing treatment for heart trouble. After his death a certificate was issued by a doctor of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital that the cause of death was unknown. It is expected that the City Coroner (Mr. H. H. Farrington) will hold an inquest concerning the death in about a fortnight's time.

An examination of the body has been conducted by the Assistant Government Medical Officer, and portions of the stomach were sent to the Government Analyst to be analysed. The result of the analysis had not been announced.

Missing Securities

The affidavit of Edgar Harold Booth, lecturer in physics at the University of Sydney, and hon. secretary of the Royal Society of New South Wales, set out that Chapman was for many years past, up till the date of his death, the honorary treasurer of the society, and had under his control funds and securities, which included Australian consolidated bonds of the face value of £7,200. On several occasions Chapman had stated to him that these bonds were in the custody of the Union Bank of Australia. On May 25 he enquired from the clerk in charge of the securities department at the bank and was informed that no securities were held on behalf of the society. The clerk said there was a black box on which was painted the words, "The Royal Society of New South Wales." This box was opened and found to contain bonds to the face value of £3,940.

committee meeting on February 26. Having received no reply, he wrote to the president, Sir George Julius, and the executive committee, pointing out that certain matters required immediate attention, and suggesting the appointment of a finance committee. A committee was appointed and met on several subsequent occasions. On May 21 a meeting of the federal committee was held. Professor Chapman objected to the proceedings on the grounds that the meeting was unconstitutional, and that he was the person who should deal with the funds of the council. The rest of the committee asked for an audit immediately, and Professor Chapman wanted to put it off till the end of June.

Evidence Of Deficiency

The question of the balance-sheet of the Royal Society said the witness, arose during the discussion during which a member of the committee urged the necessity of viewing bonds held by the bank. Professor Chapman said that he had lost the key to the box, and threatened Sir George Julius and witness with legal proceedings.

The witness said that the books of the council had not been seen since May 21, when they were in Professor Chapman's possession. New books had now been prepared, there was a deficiency, but the exact amount had not been ascertained.

William Percival Minell, auditor for the Royal Society, and whose firm are the Australian National auditors for the Australian National Research Council, said that after the meeting of the finance committee of the latter body, at which Sir George Julius had given definite instructions for an immediate audit, Professor Chapman had called at his office and said, "Oh Minell, all this trouble in connection with the Research Council is just simply due to the fact that Sir George Julius and his engineers want to run the show."

The witness added that he was present later when the box of the Royal Society was opened. The deficiency was £3,620.

The enquiry was adjourned until Friday.

On or about April 9, he signed a cheque at Chapman's request, for £100 upon the Bank of Australasia in favor of H. G. Chapman, or order. Chapman stated to him that the cheque was for the purpose of enabling him to purchase further bonds for the society. He had been informed by the chief ledgerkeeper and the accountant of the bank, that the cheque was presented for payment and cleared on April 9. No bonds to the value of £100 had been traced among any documents other than those found in the black box.

Dealings In Stocks And Shares

Norman Lethbridge Cowper, in an affidavit, stated that he was a member of the firm of Allen, Allen & Hemsley, the solicitors for the Royal Society of New South Wales. On May 31 he interviewed Mr. Linton Palmer, a member of the firm of Joseph Palmer and Sons, stock and sharebrokers, of Sydney, and was informed that, between March 25, 1929, and March 27, 1934, Chapman had sold through his firm Government bonds and stock to the total value of about £48,600; also that between the same dates, Chapman had purchased through his firm Government bonds and stock to the value of about £7,078, and had received payments by cheques of approximately £48,200. In addition there had been dealings in Mount Morgan and Triton gold mine shares, but the total amount of purchases and sales of such shares did not exceed £500.

Research Council Allegations

Mr. Cowper's affidavit went on to state that he had been informed by Sir George Julius, chairman of the Australian National Research Council, that Chapman had been honorary treasurer of the council for a number of years, that important books dealing with the affairs of the council, which were in Chapman's custody, were missing, and that the sum of nearly £16,000, alleged by Chapman to be invested, could not be accounted for. Mr. Cowper estimated that Chapman's assets did not exceed £2,000.

After reading his affidavit, Mr. Cowper said he had been informed by Dr. Waddell that, attached to Chapman's will, was a list purporting to show his assets. This included £500 worth of shares in University Club, £50 in the B.M.A., various other securities, and £85,000 worth of Commonwealth bonds. All investigations by the family, the police, and his firm had shown that this was mere bluff. There was evidence of Chapman being continually pressed for audits by the two societies; furthermore, there was certain information leaving no doubt that, between December 20 last, and the end of April, large sums had been drawn from his private account into which the proceeds of the sale of bonds had been paid by Joseph Palmer & Sons.

Search For Securities

Evidence was given by Detective Sergeant Delaney that he interviewed the manager of the head office of the Bank of Australasia, who informed him that Chapman had two accounts with the bank, the total credit in which was not £100. The bank did not hold any bonds or securities on behalf of Chapman. He also searched Chapman's rooms at the University Club and a flat in St. Michael's Flats, Hunter street, and one in Gynyal Flats, Pine avenue, Bondi, of which he had been informed Chapman was the tenant, but he had failed to find any securities there. At a garage in Old South Head, Bondi, he saw two motor cars which he was informed belonged to Chapman.

Witness further stated that he had examined private documents in the Cancer Research office at the University, but they did not indicate that Chapman had any assets, except certain furniture and shares. His enquiries indicated that the value of deceased's assets which he had been able to trace would be about £1,250.

After an adjournment, Mr. Cowper said that efforts were being made to get in touch with the widow, in order to obtain her consent to the estate being administered. He expected that he would be in a position to proceed on Monday.

Mr. Justice Lukin agreed, as it was a matter of importance, to hear further evidence on Monday.

Thursday
June 21st 1932

THE ARGUS, THURSDAY

MANIPULATION OF FUNDS

Dr. Chapman's Actions

National Research Council's Position Explained

A meeting of the Victorian and South Australian members of the executive committee of the Australian National Research Council was held in Melbourne yesterday. The president (Sir George Julius) presided, and those present included Sir David Masson, the vice-chancellor of the University of Adelaide (Sir William Mitchell), and Dr. A. C. D. Rivett, vice-presidents; Professors W. E. Agar, A. E. V. Richardson, and E. W. Skeats, and Mr. W. E. Wainwright. Sir Herbert Gepp and Sir Douglas Mawson were unable to attend.

Sir George Julius placed before the meeting a full statement of the position arising from the defalcations of the late honorary treasurer (Dr. H. G. Chapman), who had held office for the last eight years, and before that had been the council's honorary auditor. Sir George Julius said that undoubtedly Dr. Chapman had done most able work in the past, and it was evident that only in comparatively recent times had he attempted the systematic manipulations which had led to the present position, entailing a loss to the Research Council of approximately £14,000.

The committee passed a resolution expressing its great appreciation of the businesslike way in which Sir George Julius and Mr. A. J. Gibson had dealt with the council's difficulties. Members made reference to the extremely awkward position in which a temporary officer, such as a president or honorary secretary, found himself when confronted by a long-established system of dealing with finances, which had worked well for many years in the hands of a trusted scientific worker. Last year, it was explained, Sir George Julius had challenged, on business principles, the practice of having one man (Dr. Chapman) as honorary treasurer of several scientific societies which, at times, might have financial dealings with one another. Such a situation lent itself to improper action. At that time there was no reason to suspect any dishonesty by Dr. Chapman. Nevertheless Sir George Julius and Mr. Gibson had insisted upon the appointment of a special finance committee, and had protested against the delay in the last audit. Finally, they had ordered a well-known Sydney auditor to examine the position, and the result was the discovery of extensive losses.

The opinion was expressed that but for the insistence of these two honorary officers upon the application of business principles to the organisation, the losses would have been far worse. The National Research Council was still able to carry on its work at its head office in Sydney, and also in the field where 14 anthropological investigators were engaged. The position of the Rockefeller contribution toward the maintenance of this work had been practically unaffected.

The text of the resolution passed by the committee is as follows:—

"That this meeting of executive members of the Australian National Research Council from Victoria and South Australia records its gratitude to the president (Sir George Julius) and the honorary secretary (Mr. A. J. Gibson) for their action, which led to the discovery of the defalcation committed by the late honorary treasurer. They inherited not long ago from their predecessors in office that faith in Dr. Chapman's loyalty and ability which had prevailed for many years both in this council and in several other organisations which he served in the same capacity. We now know that trust to have been abused; but the discovery might have been considerably delayed had it not been for the vigilance of the council's president and the honorary secretary and the pressure that they exercised."