

1858 FLOOD HUTT RIVER SILVERSTREAM UPPER HUTT

On the 18th January 1858 there was torrential rain resulting in a rapid rise of the Hutt River. Three dwellings in the Silver Stream area of Upper Hutt were swept away in the floods and thirteen lives were lost by drowning. Mr Richard Wyeth was the licensee of the Barley Mow Inn in Silverstream and he owned the property where the three dwellings were situated.

House one

1. Thomas STANAWAY died 1858 age 40 born about 1818
2. Sarah STANAWAY died 21 January 1858 age 40 born about 1818
3. Richard STANAWAY died 25 January 1858 age 16 born 1842
4. Sarah STANAWAY died 1858 age 12 born about 1846
5. Jane STANAWAY died 18 January 1858 age 10 born about 1848
6. Fanny STANAWAY died 18 January 1858 age 6 born about 1852
7. Eliza STANAWAY died 1858 age 4 born 1854

House two

8. Charlotte HAGAN nee DEW died 18 January 1858 age 19 born about 1839
9. Male Infant HAGAN died 18 January 1858 age 5 hours born about 1858
10. Sarah PRICE (nurse/midwife/visitor) died 18 January 1858 age 36 born about 1822

House Three

11. Charles SOLLARS died 18 January 1858 age 40 born about 1818
 12. Mary Ann SOLLERS died 18 January 1858 age 30 born 1828
 13. Charles Samuel James SOLLERS died 18 January 1858 age 2 months born about 1857
- (Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 30 January 1858)*

CORONERS REPORTS

Report One

20 January 1858 Coroner's Report [8 drowned]

Hutt District Inquisition on Sarah Price, Charlotte Hagen & Others filed 29 January 1858
Information of witnesses taken this 21st day of January 1858 in the District of the Hutt at the house of Robert Blade in the said district before Benjamin Buck Coroner for the District of the Hutt touching the deaths of Sarah Price, Charlotte Hagen and Infant son, Charles Sollars, Mary Ann Sollars and son, and two female children named Stanaway then and there lying dead as follows.

Charles Hartley examined being sworn stated that he was up the valley of the Hutt near Mr Wyetts Barley Mow Inn about 5 o'clock in the morning of January 18th the water was running in the river rapidly. He was talking with Mr Wyeth about that time and he asked him if he thought the flood would rise high enough to injure the cattle and he said no. About 8 o'clock the water had risen in high as to entre Mr Haggan's house and witness went in to assist the inmates, upstairs there were Mrs Haggan and child and the nurse Sarah Price. The water rose very rapidly and he went to Stanaways house which he had to reach by swimming, the inmates were all right then. He returned to Hagans house and assisted the inmates to get on the roof of the house, Mr Stanaway the Carpenter and his wife and five children had to climb onto the roof of their house as the water rose, witness afterwards saw the house carried away by the force of the current and the inmates were all drowned, vig., Mr Stanaway carpenter his wife and five children, Mr Sollar blacksmith his wife and children and Mrs Hagan her infant son and Sarah Price, Mrs Hagan had been confined early the same morning. Witness escaped by swimming – signature of Charles Hartley

and

William Thomas – examined being sworn states that he was up the Hutt (where he resides) on January 18th there was a flood and the water rose very quickly. There were three houses carried away near Mr Wyeth's, at the Silver Stream. He saw Stanaway's house carried away with seven people on it. Witness has seen the bodies and recognizes them to be there of Charlotte Hagan and Infant Son, Sarah Price, Charles Sollars, Mary Ann Sollars his wife and son, and two children named Stanaway - signature Wm Thomas

and

Province of Wellington - An inquisition indented taken in our sovereign lady the Queen at the house of Robert Blade situated at the Taita in the Hutt district in the 21st year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria before Benjamin Buck Coroners for our said Lady in the said District on view of the bodies of Sarah Price, Charlotte Hagan and Infant Son, Charles Sollars, Mary Ann Sellars and child, and the children Stanaway, then and thence lying dead upon the oath of Alexander Yule Forman

James Harris, John Gardiner, John Daysh, Daniel Box, Thomas Robinson, Richard Clifton, John Vile, John Livingston, William Mills, James Phillips, George Whiteman, Good and Lawful men of the said district duly known and who being then and there duly sworn and stayed to engineer concerning the deaths of Sarah Price, Charlotte Hagen & Infant son, Charles Sallars, Mary Ann Sellers & Child, 2 children Stanaway do upon their oath say that the above were accidentally drowned.

(Signed by the Jurors) - Alexr. Yule Foreman – John Daysh (his X mark) – Thomas Robinson – John Vile – John Livingston – Richard Clifton – William Mills (his X mark) – John Box – John Yarnold – James Phillips - George Whiteman (his X mark) – James Harris (his X mark)

Benjamin Buck Coroner

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 3/at – 1858 Coroner's Inquest case files Wellington – Sarah Price, Charlotte Hagen and infant son, Charles Sellars wife Mary Ann and son, two Stanaway children)

Report Two

21st January 1858 Coroner's report

Hutt District Inquisition on Sarah Stanaway filed 29 January 1858

Information of the witnesses taken this 21st day of January 1858 in the District of the Hutt at the house of Robert Blade in the said District before Benjamin Buck Coroner for the District of the Hutt touching the death of Mrs Stanaway then and there lying dead as follows.

Charles Hartley Examined being sworn stated that he had seen the body of the deceased and recognised it to be that of Mrs Stanaway witness had seen Stanaway house carried bodily down the river when all the inmates had perishes witness was residing at the time in the house of Charles Sollars blacksmith – signed Charles Hartley

Charles Pryke examined being sworn stated that he had seen the deceased and recognised the lady shown to the Jury as that of Mrs Stanaway at the Upper Hutt – signed Charles Pryke

All the above information were severally taken and acknowledged the Day Year and Place first above mentioned before – Benjamin Buck Coroner for the Hutt

Province of Wellington An Inquisition indented taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at the house of Robert Blade situated at the Hutt in the 21st year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner for our said Lady in the said District on view of the body of Sarah Stawaway upon oaths of William Earp, William Tandy, John Rush, Robert Clark, Thomas Middleditch, George Headley, John Edwards, Thomas Avery, Charles Faltner, John Carroll, George Swinton & Charles Sage. Good and Lawful men of the said District duly chosen and who being then and there duly sworn and charged to enquire for our said Lady the Queen when how and by what means the said Sarah Stanaway came by her death do upon their oaths say that the said Mrs Stanaway died accidentally by drowning and the Jury wish to express their approbation of the conduct of Charles Hartley in shewnously exciting himself to save the deceased and others. The witnesses whereof the said Coroner as well as the Jurors aforesaid have herewith set and subscribed their hands and seal this 21st day of January in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and Fifty Eight Signed by George Headley – John Carroll (his X mark) – George Swinton – Robert Clark – John Rush – William Parp – Charles Sage – Charles Faulkner (his X mark) – John Edwards – Thomas Middleditch (his X mark) – William Tandy – Thomas Avery (his X mark) – Signed Benjamin Buck Coroner.

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 3/an – 1858 Coroner's Inquest case files Wellington – Sarah Stanaway)

Report Three

27 January 1858 Coroner's report

Hutt District Inquisition on Thomas Stanaway & Richard Stanaway filed 29 January 1858

Information of witnesses taken this 27th day of January 1858 in the District of the Hutt at the House of Robert Blade in the said District before Benjamin Buck Coroner in the District of the

Hutt touching the death of Thomas Stanaway and Richard Stanaway there lying dead as follows.

Sydney Hurst carpenter being sworn states that he recognized the bodies shown to the Jury are those of Thomas Stanaway father & Richard Stanaway his son – signed Sidney Hirst

and

William Hall carpenter examined being sworn states that on the morning of January 27th he saw the body of Richard Stanaway buried in the sand between Mr McHardie & Mr Scotts houses Mr McHardie & his son David McHardie, William Dodge, Joseph Hale were present and helped to get him out – Signed William Hull

All of the above information were severally taken and acknowledged the Day Year and place first mentioned before Benjamin Buck Coroner for the Hutt

and

Province of Wellington An Inquisition indented taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at the house of Robert Blade situated at the Taita in the Hutt in the 21st year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner for our said Lady in the said District on view of the bodies of Thomas Stawaway and Richard Stanaway then and there lying dead upon the oaths of George Hadley, Robert McCulloch, John Rayner, George Wright, Samuel Burnett, Charles Mabey, John Hooper, Richard Clifton, John Carroll, Job Mabey, Matthew Gaskin and Charles Falkner Good and lawful men of the said district duly chosen and who being then and there duly sworn and charged to enquire for our said Lady the Queen when how and by what means the said Thomas Stanaway and Richard Stanaway came by their death do upon their oaths say that the Said Thomas Stanaway and Richard Stanaway came to their deaths Accidentally by Drowning. In witness thereof the said Coroner as well as the Jurors aforesaid have herewith set and subscribed their hands and seals this 27th day of January in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and Fifty Eight. Signed by George Hadley Foreman – Robert McCulloch – John Rayner – George Wright – Samuel Bennett – C Mabey – John Hooper (his X mark) – Richard Clifton (his X mark) – John Carroll (his X mark) – Job Mabey (his X mark) – Matthew Gaskin (his X mark) – Charles Falkner (his X mark) – Signed by Benjamin Buck Coroner

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 3/au – 1858 Coroner's Inquest case files Wellington – Thomas & Richard Stanaway)

Report Four

30 January 1858 Coroner's report

Hutt District Inquisition on Eliza Stanaway filed 01 March 1858

Information of witnesses taken this 30th day of January 1858 in the District of the Hutt at the House of Robert Blade in the said District before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner in the District of the Hutt touching the death of Eliza Stanaway then and there lying dead as follows.

and

Sydney Hunt Examined being sworn states that he saw the body of Eliza Stanaway this morning January 30th It was lying covered up by sand & by a tree within about a stones throw of Mr Benge's house the body had been discovered yesterday by a child of Mr Benge. Sidney Hirst

The above information was taken and acknowledged the day year and place first above mentioned before Benjamin Buck Coroner in the Hutt

and

Province of Wellington An Inquisition indented taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at the house of Robert Blade situated at the Hutt (Travellers Rent) Taita in the Hutt District in the 21st year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner for our said Lady in the said District on view of the body of Eliza Stawaway lying dead upon the oaths of Alfred Revall, William Scarron, Henry Ampplet, Daniele Box, James Bennett, Thomas Robinson, William Sunnex, John Carrol, David Hughey, Richard Clifton, George Swinton and Robert Blade. Good and lawful men of the said district duly chosen and who being then and there duly sworn and charged to enquire in our said Lady the Queen when how and by what means the said Eliza Stanaway cause by her death do upon oaths say that the said Eliza Stanaway came to her death Accidentally by Drowning. The witness whereof the said Coroner as well as the Jurors aforesaid have herewith set and subscribes their hands and seal this 30th day of January in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight hundred and

Fifty eight – signed by Alfred Renall Freeman – Robt Blade – George Swinston – David Hughley – William Kerrow – John Box – Henry Anpplet – Thomas Robinson – James Bennett – William Sunnex (his X mark) Richard Clifton (his X mark) John Carrol (his X mark) – Benjamin Buck Coroner

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 3/bb – 1858 Coroner's Inquest case files Wellington – Eliza Stanaway)

Report Five

08 October 1858 Coroner's report

Hutt District Inquisition on Sarah Stanaway filed 18 October 1858

Information of the witnesses taken this Eighth day of October 1858 in the District of the Hutt at the house of George Buck in the said District before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner for the District of the Hutt touching the death of Sarah Stanaway then and there lying dead as follows. [daughter of Thomas and Sarah Stanaway]

Maris Ann WYETH examined being sworn states that she knew Sarah Stanaway the deceased came several times to her father's house and was dressed in a black dress with a blue and white & brown check shirt witness recognising the shirt found with the deceased as the same as she had seen her wearing when alive. – signed Maria Anna Wyeth

and

Elizabeth Kilminster examined being sworn states that she found a skull on Mr Fry's ground not far from her house on October 1st it having being left there by the flood. – signed Elizabeth Kilminster (her X mark) David Hughey witness

and

Michael Financan examined being sworn states that he is corporal of Police at the Hutt that on October the 7th he crossed the river near Mrs Ebdacy [sic] house at the Taita and proceeded to the spot where the head had been found. He picked up the clothes shewn to be very close to the spot and also some other bones. Witness took the clothes up to Mr Wyeth as they were recognised by his child as the clothes worn by Sarah Stanaway – signed Michael Financan

All the above information were severally taken ad acknowledge the day year and place first mentioned before

Benjamin Buck Coroner In the Hutt District

and

Province of Wellington An Inquisition indented taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at the house of George Buck by the sign of the Travellers Rest situated at the Hutt in the 22nd year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria before Benjamin Buck Surgeon Coroner for our said Land for the said District on view of the body of Sarah Stawaway then and there lying dead upon oaths of George Avery, William Milne, Peter Bruce, John Daysh, David Hughey, William Hughey, Thomas Robinson, Job Mabey, John Edwards, John Carroll, Thomas McKay & Thomas Heyward. Good and lawful men of the said district duly chosen and who being then and there duly sworn and charged to enquire for our said Lady the Queen when how and by what means the said Sarah Stanaway came by her death do upon their oaths say that the aforesaid Sarah Stanaway was accidently drowned at the Hutt in a flood on January 18th. The witness whereof the said Coroner as well as the Jurors aforesaid have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals this Eighth day of October in the year of our Lord eight hundred and fifty eight. Signed by - Wm Hughey – David Hughey – Thomas Hayward – Peter Bruce – John Edwards – George Avery – Thos McKay – Thos Robinson – William S Milne – Job Mabey (his X mark) Benjamin Buck witness – John Daysh – John Carroll (his X mark) Benjamin Buck witness – and Benjamin Buck Coroner

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington ACGS 16231 J46 3/an – 1858 Coroner's Inquest case files Wellington – Sarah Stanaway)

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Wellington Independent newspaper Wednesday 20 January 1858

Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - 14 [sic] Lives Lost – It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the Valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen lives. On Sunday evening last it rained heavily and continued with little intermission

during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with a strong wind from the N W. About daylight on Monday, the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly and occurring at an early hour, when the whole population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former ones occurred in the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away they were unfortunately drowned the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan (daughter of Mr Dew), and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued though much exhausted. Dr Buck the coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge, is we hear, entirely carried away leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communication, between the Upper and Lower Valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel and swept away Butler's house besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbett's public house is a complete wreck and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni [Petone] side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has we are told, lost about 300 sheep, Mr Mason a number of young stock, Mr Riddiford about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particular of which have not yet reached us.

Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government, to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the bridleway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual to-morrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence have taken place on the Petoni [sic] road, nor have we heard of any other than slight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

and

The Hutt - [From our Correspondent] - Hutt 20th January 1858 - On the East side of the Remutaka, some 20 slips have taken place and it will take fifty pounds to clear and repair the road to its former position. On the west side of the hill little injure is done, five pounds will reinstate it in its former position. The Pakaratahi river rose about 5 feet higher than it and been known to do upon any former occasion. Hodder's had great difficulty in saving their horses from being drowned. It will take fifty pounds to repair the damage done to the road between Hodder's and Collin's. Mr Collins has lost all his sheep and has found 53 carcasses. The river was ten feet higher than he had ever known it before. Upon crossing the Mungaroa, the river had been 6 and 8 feet above the main line of road. Nearly opposite Petre's Saw Mill, the river has made new channels, and has swept whole fields of grain and potatoes away. On this side of the Mill the main road is blocked up with the wreck of houses and drift timber. The Maoris were picking out their apparel and goods to dry. Some of the Pakeha's, whose dwellings were washed away, it is said, would have lost their lives had it not been for the Maori's. From six to ten feet of water has been rushing over the road. Mr Barton has lost considerable number of sheep, all the Maori Pa's were well supplied with a number of sheep's carcasses. Near the silver stream the devastation becomes more apparent, the fences are gone, huge pieces of timber lay across the road, the crops are borne down and at the East abutment of the Bridge is a log stretched across the road about six feet in diameter, but upon reaching Wyeth's, the force of the flood is marked, not only by the disappearance of dwellings but by the loss of life. The flood at the Silver Stream first rushes across the read in a South East direction and then rolls hack to the river at Wyeth's, and such was the force of the flood

that it carried away several dwellings belonging to Mr Wyeth and the inmates, who were drowned, to the number of 13. At 5 pm 7 bodies had been found and a Coroner's Inquest is to sit at 2 o'clock this day the 20th, upon their bodies. The following are the names given of those that are drowned. Mr Stannaway, wife and five children, Mr Charles Sillary, his wife and child, Mrs Hagin, and her new born infant, also Mrs Price the nurse, a person named Hartley, succeeded in swimming a tree and saved his life by hanging to the tree about 14 hours. The bodies found are Mr Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagin (Mr Dew's daughter), Mrs Price, with the infant in her arms, only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old, six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's, the Traveller's rest and three at Mr Dew's. No lives were lost at the lower Hutt, but considerable damage has been done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endways into the river, and the river has found a new course near Buckridge public house. The Hutt Bridge stands but the Waiwetu is carried from the piles and swept away.

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 20 January 1858 page 3)

Colonist newspaper 26 January 1858

Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - 14 Lives Lost - (From the Wellington Independent January 20) - It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the Valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen [sic] lives. On Sunday evening last it rained heavily and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with strong wind from the NW. About daylight on Monday the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly, and occurring at an early hour when the whole, population were in bed the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former offers occurred to the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow, a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood "induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away they were unfortunately drowned, the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan, (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued though much exhausted. Dr Buck the coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge, we hear, entirely carried away, leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communications between the Upper and Lower Valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel, and swept away Butler's house, besides damaging more or less several small bridged. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbett's public House is a complete wreck, and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni [sic] side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has, we are told, lost about 300 sheep, Mr Mason a number of young stock, Mr Riddiford about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us, immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the bridleway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual to-morrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence, have taken place on the Petoni [sic] road nor have we heard of any other than slight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

(Reference Papers past website Colonist newspaper 26 January 1858 page 2)

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronical newspaper 27 January 1858

Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - Fourteen Lives Lost - [From the Wellington Independent, Jan, 20] - It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the Valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen lives. On Sunday evening last it rained heavily, and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with strong wind from the N.W. About daylight on Monday the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly, and occurring at an early hour when the whole population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former ones occurred in the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow, a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away they were unfortunately drowned, the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children, were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued, though much exhausted. Dr Buck, the coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we shall shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge is, we hear, entirely carried away, leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communication between the upper and lower valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel, and swept away Butler's house, besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbett's public house is complete wreck, and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming a temporary breakwater, and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has, we are told, lost about 300 sheep - Mr Mason a number of young stock - Mr Riddiford about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us. Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the Bridgeway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual tomorrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence have taken place on the Petoni road, nor have we heard of any other than Blight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

(Reference Papers past website Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronical newspaper 27 January 1858 page 2)

Colonist newspaper 29 January 1858

Wellington - Further Particulars of the late Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - (From a Correspondent of the Wellington Independent) - Hutt, 19th Jan. 1858 - On the East side of the Remutaka, some 20 slips have taken place, and it will take £50 to clear and repair the road to its former position. On the west side of the hill little injury is done, five pounds will reinstate it in its former position. The Pakaratahi river rose about five feet higher than it had been known to do upon any former occasion. Hodder's had great difficulty in saving their horses from being drowned. It will take £50 to repair the damage done to the road between Hodder's and Collins'. Mr Collins has lost all his sheep and has found 53 carcasses. The river was 10 feet higher than he had ever known it before. Upon crossing the Mungoroa, the river had been 6 and 8 feet above the main line of road. Nearly opposite Petre's Saw Mill, the river has made new channels, and has swept whole fields of grain and potatoes away. On this side of the mill the main road is blocked up with the wreck of houses and drift timber. The Maoris were picking out their apparel and goods to dry. Some of the Pakeha's, whose dwellings were washed away, it is said, would have lost their lives had it not been for the Maoris. From 6 to 10 feet of water has been rushing over the road. Mr Barton has lost a considerable number of sheep, all the Maori pa's were well supplied with a number of sheep's carcasses. Near the Silver Stream the devastation becomes more apparent, the fences are gone, huge pieces of

timber lay across the road, the crops are borne down, and at the east abutment of the bridge is a log stretched across the road about six feet in diameter, but upon reaching Wyeth's, the force of the flood is marked, riot only by the disappearance of dwellings, but by the loss of life. The flood at the Silver Stream first rushes across the road in a south east direction, and then rolls back to the river at Wyeth's, and such was the force of the flood that it carried away several dwellings belonging to Mr Wyeth and the inmates, who were drowned, to the number of 13. At five pm 7 bodies had been found, and a coroner's inquest is to sit at 2 o'clock this day the 20th, upon the bodies. The following are the names given of those that are drowned - Mr Stannaway, wife and five children, Mr Charles Sillary, his wife and child, Mrs Hagin, and her new born infant, also Mrs Price the nurse, a person named Hartley succeeded in swimming to a tree, and saved his life by hanging to the tree about 14 hours. The bodies found are Mr Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagin (Mr Dew's daughter), Mrs Price, with the infant in her arms, only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old, six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's, the Traveller's rest, and three at Mr. Dew's. No lives were lost at the lower Hutt, but considerable damage has been done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endways into the river, and the river has found a new course near Buckridge's public house. The Hutt bridge stands, but the Waiwetu is carried from the piles and swept away.

(Reference Papers past website Colonist newspaper 29 January 1858 page 4)

Wellington Independent newspaper 30 January 1858

The Hutt - Public Meeting - A public meeting of the Hutt settlers was held at the Mechanic's Institute on Tuesday evening last, the 26th Instant, for the purpose of taking into consideration the best means to be adopted to repair the damage occasioned by the late floods and to take such measures as will prevent (as far as human skill can devise) a recurrence of a similar calamity. The meeting was numerously attended, and Mr Brathwaite occupied the chair. The meeting was addressed by Messrs Lynch, McHardie, McDowall, Corbett, Milne, Jillett, Renall, Bruce and D Hughey, and a large amount of valuable information was elicited. Several of the speakers expressed their regret, which was sympathised in by the meeting, that there was no one present to represent the Provincial Government. The resolutions were unanimously adopted. Moved by Mr Ludlam seconded by Hart - That this meeting is of opinion that immediate and energetic action is required in order to repair the serious public damage done by the recent inundation of this Valley, and in order also to guard against the recurrence of the attendant calamities as far as human means can avail.

Moved by Mr Wakefield, seconded by Mr Jillett - That the following; gentlemen be requested to act as a Committee for the purpose of communicating with the Government on the subject, of obtaining accurate information as to the causes of the damage and means of remedy, and of collecting subscriptions towards the necessary expenses viz. - Messrs Ludlam, Hart, Corbett, Philips, Wilcock, David Hughey, Lynch, Mason, and Wakefield.

Moved by Mr Hart, seconded by Mr Riddiford - That the Committee be requested to open a separate Subscription List for the purpose of relieving serious cases of private distress among the sufferers by the recent inundation.

Coroner's Inquest - An inquest was held at Mr Robert Blade's; the Traveller's Rest Inn Taita, in the Hutt, on Wednesday, Jan. 20th, by Dr Buck Coroner, for the Hutt District, upon the bodies of Mrs Hagan, and infant son, Mrs Price their nurse, Charles Sollars Blacksmith, his wife and child, and two children named Fanny and Jane Stannaway, residents of the Upper Hutt, who had been drowned by the flood on January 18th. It was stated in evidence that on Monday morning January 18th, in consequence of the heavy rains of the previous days, the river rose rapidly, and soon overflowed the whole valley, and as the rain continued to fall incessantly during the same day, the water rose to an alarming height. The greatest injury was done near the Silver Streams where the deceased parties resided. The water gradually rising in their houses until they had to betake themselves to the roofs, the current being strong around them, and the ground lower than where they were situated, their escape was cut off. Charles Hartley who was residing with Sollars, swam from one house to another, and assisted the inmates in getting on to the roof, and as the water still rose, he endeavoured to get them to land by means of a rope, but without success and was at last obliged to save himself by swimming. The houses were at length carried away. On the roof of one was Mr Stannaway carpenter, his wife and five children, and on the others were Mr Sellars blacksmith, his wife

and one child, and Mrs Hagan, her infant, and the nurse Mrs Price. The houses were carried down the stream some distance before they broke up and then all perished. The eight bodies were found on the previous day, January 19, between Mr Dew's and Mr Dalgely. An Inquest was held at the same place on January 21st, on the body of Mrs Stanaway which had been found on the evening of the previous day. Verdict - Accidental Death by Drowning. The Jury at the same time wished to express the high opinion they had of the conduct of James Hartley, in his strenuously exerting himself to save the sufferers, at the risk of his own life. January 25th - The body of Richard Stanaway was found this morning near Mr Ebden's, leaving now three bodies unfound, viz., Mr Stanaway and two more of the children.

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 30 January 1858 page 3)

Lyttleton Times newspaper 30 January 1858

Wellington - We have papers to the 20th instant - Flood at the Hutt - The late rains have caused a very heavy flood at the Hutt, which we are sorry to learn, has occasioned very serious damage and loss to persons living in the district. It commenced raining on Sunday evening, and continued without intermission until the following evening. The river rose to a greater height than has been, known before, the water; entering many houses that had been above the level of previous floods. Immense trees were brought down by the flood and left in different parts of the road, which is broken up in several places and has become quite impassable. Butler's house is entirely washed away, and the river has broken through still further in that direction. Corbett's the Aglionby Arms is rendered uninhabitable, the river having swept away half of the house and made a fresh course for itself, so as to leave the remainder of the building standing as an island in the middle of the stream. Mr Corbett had incurred an expense of £100 the week previous in driving piles and forming a breastwork to protect the house against future freshes. With great difficulty he contrived to save the furniture from the upper rooms. The river has broken the bank away on both sides the bridge, which is now impassable; when the flood was at its height it was level with the floor of the bridge, many of the iron fastenings and cross sleepers of which have been carried away - Spectator January 20

The independent adds the following particulars - On Sunday evening last it rained heavily and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with a strong wind from the N.W. About daylight on Monday the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt; Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly and, occurring at an early hour when the population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life, which distinguishes this flood from all former ones, occurred in the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow, a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away, they were unfortunately drowned, the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman and five children were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr. Hagan was fortunately rescued though much exhausted. Dr Buck, the coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge is, we hear, entirely carried away, leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communication between the Upper and Lower valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel and swept away Butler's house besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbett's public house is a complete wreck and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious, damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River Bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has we are told, lost about 300 sheep - Mr Mason a number of young stock - Mr Riddiford about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us.

Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the Bridgeway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual tomorrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence have taken place on the Petoni road, nor have we heard of any other than slight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

The following is from a Correspondent - Hutt 19th January 1858 - On the east side of the Remutaka some 20 slips have taken place, and it will take £50 to clear and repair the road to its former position. On the west side of the hill little injury is done, £5 will reinstate it in its former position. The Pakaratahi river rose about five feet higher than it had been known to do upon any former occasion. Hodder's had great difficulty in saving their horses from being drowned. It will take £50 to repair the damage done to the road between Hodder's and Collin's. Mr Collins has lost all his sheep and has found 53 carcasses. The river was ten feet higher than he had ever known it before. Upon crossing the Mungaroa the river had been six and eight feet above the main line of road. Nearly opposite Petre's saw mill the river has made new channels, and has swept whole fields of grain and potatoes away. On this side of the mill the main road is blocked up with the wreck of houses and drift timber. The Maoris were picking out their apparel and goods to dry. Some of the Pakeha's whose dwellings were washed away, it is said would have lost their lives had it not been for the Maoris. From six to ten feet of water has been rushing over the road Mr Barton has lost a considerable number of sheep all the Maori Pa's were well supplied with a number of sheep's carcasses. Near the Silver Stream the devastation becomes more apparent, the fences are gone, huge pieces of timber lay across the road, the crops are borne down, and at the east abutment of the bridge is a log stretched across the road about six feet in diameter; but upon reaching Wyeth's the force of the flood is marked not only by the disappearance of dwellings, but by the loss of life. The flood at the Silver Stream first rashes across the road in a south east direction and then rolls back to the river at Wyeth's, and such was the force of the flood that it carried away several dwellings belonging to Mr Wyeth, and the inmates were drowned, to the number of 13. At 5 pm seven bodies had been found, and a coroner's inquest is to sit at two o'clock this day, the 20th, upon their bodies. The following are the names given of those that are drowned. Mr Stannaway, wife and five children, Mr Charles Sillary, his wife and child, Mrs Hagin and her new born infant, also Mrs Price the nurse. A person named Hartley succeeded in swimming to a tree, and saved his life by hanging to the tree about 14 hours. The bodies found are Mr Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagin (Mr Dew's daughter), Mrs Price, with the infant in her arms only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's, the Traveller's Rest, and three at Mr Dew's. No lives were lost at the Lower Hutt, but considerable damage has been done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endways into the river, and the river has found a new course near Buckridge's public house. The Hutt Bridge stands, but the Waiwetu is carried from the piles and swept away.

(Reference Papers past website Lyttelton Times newspaper 30 January 1858 page 3)

Colonist newspaper 02 February 1858

Inter-Provincial News - Wellington (From the Spectator of January 23) – The Floods at the Hutt - In our last we gave such details of the disastrous flood which had occurred at the Hutt as had reached us, we now furnish the following particulars which we believe may be relied upon, as being substantially correct. The number of bodies at present actually recovered is nine, namely - Mrs Stanway and two children, one 4 years old and the other 6 years, Mr Sollars his wife and child, Mrs Hegan and infant, and Mrs Price the other persons known to be missing are the husband of Mr Stanway, and three more of his children, who were all seen to be washed away together. The particular locality where this fearful loss of life occurred was near the "Barley Mow Inn" at the Upper Valley of the Hutt. When the flood was at its highest about one o'clock am, Tuesday morning, the force of the water at this point is described by an eye witness as having been terrific. The water was seen rushing along like an immense wave, crashing and roaring, and carrying everything before it, huge trees, portions of buildings, timber, furniture, and debris of every description, were borne away by the force of the current. To witness the havoc and destruction which the flood has caused is most painful

and baffles all description. Many acres of land which only a few hours before to all appearance promised a plentiful crop, are now covered with sand and shingle, and not a particle of vegetation remains. The quantities of drift timber, in many instances large solid trees, which have been deposited by the flood is perfectly incredible, and will take many months to remove. The unfortunate persons who have lost their lives by this calamity are mostly late arrivals in the country. Mrs Hegan (a daughter of Mr Dew an old settler at the Hutt) was living in a small wooden building near the first gorge. Mr Price and a man named Charles Hartley were also residing in the house. Upon seeing the water rise so rapidly some fear was entertained for the safety of the building, and the survivor Hartley proposed to go for a rope to secure the house, when he left the water was up to the window, and the house was actually shaking. He almost immediately lost his footing, and was swimming, with the current for nearly half-a-mile, until he succeeded in getting up a tree, where he remained for 14 hours, until rescued by some passers-by on the following day. From the position he occupied he could see everything around him he states that he soon after saw the house borne away with the current, the inmates Mrs Hegan (who was only confined that morning) and the nurse Mrs Price, were climbing on to the roof of the house, they passed by close to where he was in the tree, and he describes the shrieks of the females as fearful, a minute after the house turned over, and nothing more was seen of them. The bodies were recovered about a mile from the spot on Wednesday morning, the infant was found firmly locked in the dying grasp of the mother, the nurse was found close to her, the body was very much mangled. The bodies were removed to the house of Mr Dew, and an inquest held on them, when a verdict of accidentally drowned was returned. The husband of Mrs Hegan is absent in the country, and of course is ignorant of the desolation of his home. Mrs Price, who was much respected, and who arrived in the Ann Wilson, leaves a family of young children behind her, her husband was absent from home at the time. The other family, Mr Stanway, wife and five children, were all seen together on the roof of their house, the water rose rapidly and submerged the whole of them, and they were seen, to sink one after the other. The blacksmith Sollers with his wife and infant perished in a similar manner, they imagined themselves secure, but the house was borne away with the current, and he was heard by persons on the hills to say good bye. The bodies were found mostly together, one completely buried in the sand. A man and his wife named Smith, living near to Mr Dew, were saved after remaining on the top of a building for many hours, whilst all around them was borne away. To give anything like a detailed account of the losses sustained by residents at the Hutt would be impossible, we may however state a few of the most important particulars of individual loss of which we have been informed. Mr D Riddiford has lost about 120 sheep - Mr Barton has also lost a number of sheep - Mr Thomas Mason a number of cattle - Mr Arnott cattle and sheep - Mr John Leverton has lost entirely 50 acres of crops, and a large number of cattle - Mr C Mabey lost a number of sheep, and also a large quantity of fenced and cropped land - Mr Buckridge of the Albion Hotel has had his crops destroyed and the river has taken a course completely through his property - at Mr Wm. Tandy's the river now runs through his ground and has destroyed a large amount of property - Mrs Speedy's land is completely cut up in all directions by the different channels the rain has made, in many cases large fissures 12 feet deep have been formed - Mr Still has lost a number of sheep &c - Mr John Russell 10 head of cattle - Mr Dew an old settler, estimates his loss at not less than £500 a property which a week ago was worth many hundreds of pounds is now comparatively worthless, five acres of grass land have been completely swept away. A large number of men had volunteered to assist in removing a shingle bed which had been thrown up, and which prevents the river from taking its old channel, and nearly all the residents at the Hutt were endeavouring to contribute either in labour or otherwise to this object. The destruction of the roads between Poada's public house and the Taita is almost incredible, scarcely a vestige remains at some places of the original road, at one place (a bridge near McDonald's creek) the river runs right through the road, making it very dangerous for passengers at night, the banks descending abruptly to the depth of 15 feet; other dangerous places occur along the whole line of road. The Waiwetu and Second River bridges have both been carried away. It is to be hoped that the Provincial authorities will lose no time in removing the large quantity of drift timber now lying on the roads, and in making it again passable.

(From the Spectator of January 27) - A public meeting was held at the Hutt Mechanics' Institute, on Tuesday 26th January, to consider the best steps to be taken under the circumstances. About 200 people were present at one time during the evening, Mr Braithwaite was in the chair. Great regret was expressed at the non-attendance of any person to represent the Provincial Government. Mr Ludlam, as one of those who had signed the notice calling the meeting, opened the proceedings by explaining his objects in so doing. The following Resolutions were unanimously carried after considerable discussion.

Moved by Mr Ludlam, seconded by Mr Hart -

That this meeting is of opinion that immediate and energetic action is required in order to repair the serious public danger done by the recent inundation of this Valley, and in order also to guard against the recurrence of the attendant calamities as far as human means can avail.

Moved by Mr Wakefield, seconded by Mr Jillett -

That the following gentlemen be requested to act as a Committee for the purpose of communicating with the Government on the subject of obtaining accurate information as to the causes of the damage and means of remedy, and of collecting subscriptions towards the necessary expenses viz: - Messrs Ludlam, Hart, Corbett, Phillips, Wilcock, David Hughey, Lynch, Mason, and Wakefield.

Moved by Mr Hart, seconded by Mr Riddiford - That the Committee be requested to open a separate Subscription List for the purpose of relieving serious cases of private distress among the sufferers by the recent inundation.

Inquests at the Hutt - An inquest was held at Mr Robert Blade's the Traveller's Rest Inn, Taita, in the Hutt district, on Wednesday 20th January, by Dr Buck, Coroner for the Hutt, upon the bodies of Mrs Hagan and infant son, Mrs Price their nurse, Charles Sollars, blacksmith, his wife and child, and two children named Fanny and Jane Stanaway, residents on the Upper Hutt, who had been drowned, by the flood on January 18th. It was stated in evidence that on Monday 18th January, and in consequence of the heavy rains of the previous days, the river rose rapidly and soon overflowed the whole valley, and as the rain continued to fall incessantly during the same day the water rose to an alarming height. The greatest injury was done near the Silver Stream, where the deceased parties resided, the water gradually rising in their houses until they had to betake themselves to the roofs, the current being strong around them, and the ground lower, than where they were situated, their escape was cut off. Charles Hartely, who was residing with Sollars, swam from one house to another, and assisted the inmates in getting into the roof, and as the water still rose he endeavoured to get them to land by means of a rope, but without success, and was at last obliged to save himself by swimming. The houses were at length carried away. On the roof of one was Mr Stanaway a carpenter, his wife and five children, and on the other Mr Sollars blacksmith, his wife and child, Mrs Hagan, her infant and the nurse, Mrs Price. The houses were carried down the stream some distance before they broke up, and then all perished. The eight bodies were found on the previous day, January 19th, between Mr Dew's and Mr Dalgetty's.

An inquest was held at the same place on January 21st, on the body of Mrs Stanaway, which had been found on the evening of the previous day, January 20th - Verdict Accidental death by drowning.

The jury at the same time wished to express the high opinion they had of the conduct of Charles Hartley, in his strenuous exertions to save the sufferers at the risk of his life.

Jan. 25 - The body of Richard Stanaway was found this morning, near Mr Ebden's, leaving now three bodies unfound, viz. - Mr Stanaway and two more of the children.

(Reference Papers past website Colonist newspaper 02 February 1858 page 3 plus other newspapers)

Taranaki Herald newspaper 06 February 1858

Wellington - Disastrous Flood at the Hutt – Fourteen Lives Lost - [From the Wellington Independent] - It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the Valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen lives. On Sunday evening last it rained heavily, and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with a strong wind from the N.W. About daylight on Monday, the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly and occurring at an early hour, when the whole population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the

safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former ones, occurred in the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away they were unfortunately drowned the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan, (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued though much exhausted. Dr Buck, the Coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge is, we hear, entirely carried away leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communication between the Upper and Lower Valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel and swept away Butler's house besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbett's public house is a complete wreck and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming; a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has, we are told, lost about 300 sheep - Mr Mason a number of young stock - Mr Riddiford, about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us. Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the bridgeway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town usual tomorrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the upper Hutt can be again resumed. No flips of any [Continued in Supplement] & [Continued from third page of paper] consequence have taken place on the Petoni road, nor have we heard of any other than slight damage to the Ngahauranga line. The Hutt correspondent of the Independent says - The following are the names given of those that are drowned Mr Stannaway, wife and five children, Mr Chas. Sillary his wife and child, Mrs Hagin and her new born infant, also Mrs Price the nurse a person named Hartley succeeded in swimming to a tree and saved his life by hanging to the tree 14 hours. The bodies found are, Mr Sillary wife and child, Mrs Hagin, Mrs Price, with the infant in her arms only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old, six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's, the Traveller's rest, and three at Mr Dew's. No lives were lost at the Lower Hutt, but considerable damage has been done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endways into the river and the river has found a new course near Buckridge's public house. The Hutt bridge stands but the Waiwetti [sic] is carried from the piles and swept away.

(Reference Papers past website Taranaki Herald newspaper 06 February 1858 page 3)

Otago Witness newspaper 06 February 1858

Wellington - Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - 14 lives lost. [From the Wellington Independent January 20] - It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the Valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen lives. On Sunday evening last it rained heavily, and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied with a strong wind from the N.W. About daylight on Monday, the river began to rise, and at 0 o'clock had swollen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly, and occurring at an early hour, when the whole population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former ones, occurred in the neighbourhood of the Barley Mow, a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away they were unfortunately drowned the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family named Stannaway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children, were thus lost, the only survivor of the family

being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the Valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagin (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued, though much exhausted. Dr Buck, the coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday afternoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the gorge is, we hear, entirely carried away, leaving the face of the rock bare, stopping all cart communication between the Upper and Lower Valleys for some time. Nearer town the river has formed a new channel and swept away Butler's house, besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt bridge has fortunately sustained little injury, but the approach on the town side has been carried away some 20 feet. Corbett's public house is a complete wreck, and has fallen into the river sideways thus forming a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some injury to their fences, crops or cattle. Mr Barton has, we are told lost about 300 sheep - Mr Mason a number of young stock - Mr Riddiford about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us. Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken by the Government to remove as much as possible the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon the bridgeway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual to-morrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence have taken place on the Petoni road, nor have we heard of any other than slight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

[From the Independent's Hutt Correspondent] - Hutt 19th January 1858 - On the East side of the Remutaka, some 20 slips have taken place, and it will take £50 to clear and repair the road to its former position. On the West side of the hill little injury is done five pounds will reinstate it in its former position. The Pakaratahi river rose about five feet higher than it had been known to do upon any former occasion. Hodders had great difficulty in saving their horses from being drowned. It will take £50 to repair the damage done to the road between Hodder's and Collins'. Mr Collins has lost all his sheep, and has found 53 carcasses. The river was ten feet higher than he had ever known it before. Upon crossing the Mungaroa, the river had been six and eight feet above the main line of road. Nearly opposite Petre's saw mill, the river has made new channels, and has swept whole fields of grain and potatoes away. On this side of the mill the main road is blocked up with the wreck of houses and drift timber. The Maori's were picking out their apparel and goods to dry. Some of the Pakehas whose dwellings were washed away, it is said, would have lost their lives had it not been for the Maori's. From six to ten feet of water has been rushing over the road. Mr Barton has lost a considerable number of sheep all the Maori Pa's were well supplied with a number of sheep's' carcasses. Near the Silver Stream the devastation becomes more apparent the fences are gone, huge pieces of timber lay across the road, the crops are borne down, and at the east abutment of the bridge is a log stretched across the road about six feet in diameter, but upon reaching Wyeth's, the force of the flood is marked, not only by the disappearance of dwellings but by the loss of life. The flood at the Silver Stream first rushes across the road in a south-east direction and then rolls back to the river at Wyeth's, and such was the force of the flood that it carried away several dwellings belonging to Mr Wyeth, and the inmates were drowned to the number of 13. At 5 pm, seven bodies had been found, and a Coroner's Inquest is to sit at 2 o'clock this day, the 20th, upon their bodies. The following are the names given of those that are drowned Mr Stannaway, wife and five children, Mr Charles Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagin, and her new-born infant, also Mrs Price the nurse. A man named Hartley succeeded in swimming to a tree, and saved his life by hanging to the tree about 14 hours. The bodies found are Mr Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagan (Mr Dew's daughter), Mrs. Price, with the infant in her arms, only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old, six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's, the Traveller's Rest, and three at Dew's. No lives were lost at the Lower Hutt, but considerable damage has been done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endways into the river, and the river has found a new course

near Buckridge's public house. The Hutt bridge stands, but the Waiwetu is carried from the piles and swept away.

The Independent of the 23rd says - Since our last, we have ascertained that Mr Price was erroneously stated to have been drowned. It was reported that several Maori's had been drowned, but it arose from the flood having washed away a portion of the burial ground at Petoni, and floated several of the bodies. The river has now subsided, but the whole valley presents a most deplorable scene. His Honor the Superintendent, who returned to town on Thursday, visited the Hutt yesterday.

The Spectator of the 27th contains a report of a meeting held at the Hutt Mechanic's Institute, at which about 200 people attended, to consider the best steps to be taken under the circumstances. The following resolutions were unanimously carried - That this meeting is of opinion that immediate and energetic action is required in order to repair the serious public damage done by the recent inundation of this Valley, and in order also to guard against the recurrence of the attendant calamities as far as human means can avail. That the following gentlemen be requested to act as a Committee, for the purpose of communicating with the Government on the subject of obtaining accurate information as to the causes of the damage, and means of remedy - and of collecting subscriptions towards the necessary expenses, viz. Messrs Ludlam, Hart, Corbett, Phillips, Wilcock, David Hughey, Lynch, Mason, and Wakefield. That the Committee be requested to open a separate subscription list for the purpose of relieving serious eases of private distress among the sufferers by the recent inundation. The same paper contains an account of the Inquests held on some of the bodies. The Verdict returned was Accidental death by drowning. Three bodies are yet unfound, viz. Mr Stannaway and two of his children.

(Reference Papers past website Otago Witness newspaper 06 February 1858 page 6)

Daily Southern Cross newspaper 16 February 1858

Wellington - Disastrous Flood at the Hutt - Fourteen Lives Lost - (From the Wellington Independent January 20) - It is our painful duty to chronicle the most disastrous flood which has ever yet occurred in the valley of the Hutt, resulting in the loss of fourteen lives. On Sunday evening last, it rained heavily, and continued with little intermission during the whole of that night and Monday, accompanied by a strong wind from N.W. About daylight on Monday, the river began to rise, and at 5 o'clock had risen sufficiently to flood the valley from Mungaroa Hill to below the Hutt Bridge. On no former occasion has the river risen so rapidly, and occurring at an early hour, when the whole population were in bed, the loss occasioned by it has been heavier than it would have been had the settlers had time to make ordinary provision for the safety of themselves and property. The loss of life which distinguishes this flood from all former ones, occurred in the neighbourhood of the "Barley Mow," a few miles beyond the Taita. The rapid rise of the flood induced the occupants of the several houses to make for the roof, and on the lower portions being carried away, they were unfortunately drowned the course of the river preventing any help being afforded to them. One family, named Stannway, consisting of the man, woman, and five children, were thus lost, the only survivor of the family being a young girl, living with Mrs Roy in another part of the valley. The other names we have heard are those of Mr and Mrs Price, Mrs Hagan (daughter of Mr Dew) and child, and three others whose names are unknown to us. Mr Hagan was fortunately rescued, though much exhausted. Dr Buck the Coroner, proceeded to the spot on Tuesday forenoon, and we will shortly learn fuller particulars. The road at the Gorge is, we hear, entirely carried away, leaving the face of the rock bare and stopping all cart communication between the Upper and Lower Valleys for some time. Near the town, the river has formed a new channel, and swept away Butler's house, besides damaging more or less several small bridges. The Hutt Bridge has fortunately sustained little injury but the approach on the town side has been carried away some twenty feet. Corbet's public house is a complete wreck, and has fallen into the river sideways, thus forming a temporary breakwater and preventing more serious damage to the roadway. The water is out on the Petoni side as far as the bridge near to Cudby's, and on the other side has carried away the Waiwetu and Second River bridges. Almost everyone has suffered some damage to their fences, crops, or cattle. Mr Barton has, we are told lost 300 sheep - Mr Mason, a number of young stock - Mr Riddiford, about 100 sheep, and various other settlers have met with similar losses, authentic particulars of which have not yet reached us. Immediately on the news reaching town, steps were taken

by the Government to remove, as much as possible, the inconvenience which resulted from the stoppage of communication. Yesterday afternoon, the bridgeway was made passable for foot passengers, and we hope the vans will run to town as usual to-morrow morning. It will necessarily occupy some time before the communication with the Upper Hutt can be again resumed. No slips of any consequence have taken place on the Petoni road, nor have we heard of any other than alight damage to the Ngahauranga line.

[From our correspondent) Hutt, 19th January 1858 - On the east side of the Rimutaka, some 20 slips have taken place, and it will take £50 to clear and repair the road to its former position. On the west side of the hill little injury is done, five pounds will reinstate it in its former position. The Pakuratahi river rose about 5 feet higher than it had been known to do on any former occasion. Hodder's had great difficulty in saving their horses from being drowned. It will take £50 to repair the damage done to the road between Hodder's and Collins'. Mr Collins has lost all his sheep, and has found fifty three carcasses. The river was ten feet higher than he had ever known it before. Upon crossing the Mungaroa, the river had been 6 and 8 feet above the main line of road. Nearly opposite Petere's Saw Mill, the river has made new channels, and has swept whole fields of grain and potatoes away. On this side of the mill, main road is blocked up with the wreck of houses and drift timber. The Maori's are picking out their apparel and goods to dry. Some of the pakehas, whose dwellings were washed away, it is said, would have lost their lives had it not been for the Maori's. From six to ten feet of water has been rushing over the road. Mr Barton has lost a considerable number of sheep, all the Maori pas were well supplied with a number of sheep's carcasses. Near the silver stream the devastation becomes more apparent, the fences are gone, huge pieces of timber lie across the road, the crops are borne down, and at the east abutment of the bridge is a log stretched across the road six feet in diameter, but upon reaching Wyeth's the force of the flood is marked not only by the disappearance of dwellings but by the loss of life. The flood at the Silver Stream first rushes across the road in a south east direction, and then rolls back to the river at Wyeth's and such was the force of the flood, that it carried away several dwellings belonging to Mr Wyeth, and the mates, who were drowned to the number of 13. At five, pm, seven bodies had been found, and a coroner's inquest is to sit at two o'clock this day, the 20th, on their bodies. The following are the name given of those that are drowned Mr Stannaway, wife and five children Mr Charles Sillary, his wife and child, Mrs Hagin and her new born infant, also, Mrs Price, the nurse a person named Hartley succeeded in swimming to a tree, and saved his life by hanging to the tree about 14 hours. The bodies found are - Mr Sillary, wife and child, Mrs Hagin (Mr Dew's daughter), Mrs Price, with the infant in her arms, only born at six o'clock the same morning, and one of Mr Stannaway's little girls, about six or seven years old, six of Mr Stannaway's family are not yet found. Four of the bodies are at Blade's the Travellers Rest, and 3 at Mr Dew's. No lives were lost at the lower Hutt, but considerable damage done to property. The Aglionby Arms is tipped endwise into the river, and the river has found a new course near Buckridge's public house. The Hutt Bridge stands but the Waiwetu is carried from the piles and swept away. The same journal, in its issue of the 23rd ulto., says - Since our last we have ascertained that Mr Price was erroneously reported to have been drowned. The names of those drowned, but then unknown, are Mr Charles Sellers, wife and child. It was reported that several Maori's had been drowned, but it arose from the flood having washed away a portion of the burial ground at Petoni, and floating several of the bodies. The river has now subsided but the whole valley presents a most deplorable scene. His Honor the Superintendent, who returned to town on Thursday, visited the Hutt yesterday.

(Reference Papers past website Daily Southern Cross newspaper 16 February 1858 page 3)

Wellington Independent newspaper 08 December 1858

Residence Magistrates Court 04 December 1858 - The following transfer of Publicans Licenses was granted upon the application of (various people) and Mr Robert Wyett of Upper Hutt whose late residence had been partially washed away by the recent flood at the Upper Hutt aforesaid.

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 08 December 1858 page 3)

Wellington Independent newspaper 02 November 1869

The Floods at the Hutt - It will no doubt be of interest to compare some facts in Dr Hector's abstract of the state of the weather, published in our last issue, with corresponding ones for the Hutt valley. The observations for the latter place were made at the Hutt Grammar School, Taita by Mr Mantell, who has been kindly supplied with instruments by Dr Hector for the purpose. The barometric average for the month of October ranges somewhat higher than that stated for Wellington, being 29.96 as compared with 29.8, but a considerable difference has obtained in the rainfall, for while that for the month, in Wellington, amounted to 10 inches, Mr Mantell's note book shows no less than 15.96 inches for the same period. From the 11th to the 18th the same severe storm from NW to SE prevailed, which precisely the same amount of rain 5 inches. By far the heaviest fall at the Hutt took place during the 24 hours from 9.30 am on the 29th, to the same time on the 30th, the rain gauge registering the enormous quantity of five inches, four inches having fallen by two o'clock on the morning of the 30th. One can therefore be little surprised that, although the Hutt river had gone down very considerably since the flood of Sunday and Monday, the 24th and 25th, it rose rapidly on Friday and Saturday, till it rushed through the Lower Hutt with a rapidity that could only be appreciated when seen, submerging the land around to a considerable depth, and threatening every moment to sweep away the bridge in its furious course. Immense logs were frequently dashed against the piles, so that men were constantly employed in disentangling them and causing them to float away to the bay. The flood reached its greatest height here about noon of Saturday, and by the evening of that day so much earth had been washed away from the foot of the bridge (near Mr Valentine's Hotel) that fears were entertained of its becoming impassable, which fears however, have happily not been realised. Large pieces of land, previously contiguous to the river, have disappeared crops destroyed, and in some cases even the very soil containing them washed away from the subsoil.

At the Upper Hutt the Silver stream became a torrent and a bridge over the stream near the site of the old Barley Mow Inn being also carried away by the resistless force of the current. Mr Smith's house was completely surrounded by water. The Wairarapa coach had stopped there to change horses and to permit the passengers to take refreshment, but so rapid was the rise of the water that but the time Mr Heik the driver was read to start the bridge was gone and the travellers after being detained for twenty four hours could not resume their journey without the aid of a canoe, leaving the coach and mails behind. Their imprisonment however was made tolerable by the kindness of Mr and Mrs Smith. TBC

The road in this part of the valley has been in many places destroyed, and at the Gorges a slip, said to be over fifty yards in length, has completely blocked up the main road, which compels persons to go round the hill, and so by the track come on to the road near Mr Cotter's farm. At the Taita no more damage has been done to the road than was mentioned in our issue of Thursday last, except that the work of repairing has been entirely put a stop to. It is impossible to give anything like an adequate account of the destruction to private property which has been occasioned by the floods for it would entail the mentioning of the case of every person, for all are, more or less, sufferers.

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 02 November 1869 page 2)

New Zealand Herald newspaper 08 November 1869 page 4 the article was copied from the article located in the Independent newspaper 02 November 1869. The newspaper also noted to the article in the Independent newspaper regarding the Late Flood in the Hutt.

Evening Post newspaper 30 April 1931

Ye Wayside Inn – Vanished Hotels – Water replaces Whiskey -

Recent and old time flooding in the Hutt Valley was the subject of an interview recently in "The Evening Post" with Mr A J McCurdy who incidentally called to mind that the site of the old Barley Mow Hotel, Silverstream, is now monopolised by the Hutt River. And that observation prompted other memories Mr McCurdy, stated that in the old days of Wellington Wairarapa traffic, via Hutt Valley, the chain of hotels in the valley, from north to south, was - Golden Fleece Mrs Wagg, on rise where the main road runs down to the Pakuratahi River. On right hand side of road, looking south. [The site can still be traced, through cellar pit and remains of foundations. The hotel is mentioned by the Grey town pioneers, who mention it as the last hotel before crossing Rimutaka divide in 1853.]

Mungaroa Hotel Mrs Collens, near where the Mungaroa tributary of the Hutt crosses the main road.

Upper Hutt Eighty Years Ago. Shepherd's Rest, James Brown (senr.), Upper Hutt. Mr McCurdy remarked that Mr James Brown was the father of the late Mr George Brown, of Upper Hutt, Hutt county councillor. [Mr Brown and his hotel and Upper Hutt are also mentioned in the Greytown records of 1853.] The hotel was situated in Upper Hutt on the left hand side of the road, looking south; and the site is now occupied by Mr Cotter's plumbing premises. The hotel was afterwards known as the Criterion Hotel. Highland Home, S McHardy, on main road at Wallaceville, near the site of the "Old Blockhouse." The "Old Blockhouse, with its loop-holes, is still standing, and a signboard on the main road directs sightseers to this relic of Maori War scares.

Barley Mow, Mr Wyeth (senr.), the site of which one-time hotel is surveyed, consciously or unconsciously, by every railway passenger who looks upriver as the train swings over Silverstream railway bridge. This hotel used to be on the left-hand side of the road looking south, and the river used to flow west of the hotel and the road. In its eastward swing the river has taken the place of both hotel and road, and that the latter was moved eastward to its present location. Moving the road, said Mr McCurdy, simply meant laying out a deviation through the paddocks to the east, and it was done so quickly, that they discovered years afterward that the road site at this point had, never been properly conveyed.

Traveller's Rest, Mr ---Taita, left side of main road looking south.

After that, the Lower Hutt hotels awaited the thirsty coach traveller.

A Victorious River - If anyone wishes to locate the Barley Mow site more exactly, added Mr McCurdy, all he has to do is to look up river as he crosses Silverstream railway bridge, and he will see a few yards upstream, one little willow tree close to the river channel, but west of it, and quite distinct from the row of willows east of it. This willow springs from an old stump that used to flourish as a tree in the yard of the Barley Mow. The willow was east of the Hutt River until the river decided otherwise. It will be seen that on the western side there is still a channel in which the Hutt flows when in flood. That channel crosses the toe of a moraine or fan of material carried down from the western hills. On this fan used to be a whare it has gone where a Hutt flood took it. Another whare further east, was also carried away by flood.

It may also be of interest to know that the above mentioned Highland Home Hotel, Wallaceville, was afterwards called the Railway Hotel. The railway was being built at the time and it was thought that Wallaceville would be the principal station. But the late Hutt County, Councillor George Brown, gave the Department of Railways 28 acres of land at Upper Hutt adjacent to the Rhodes estate, and Upper Hutt became the principal station. Land for railway purposes at Silverstream was given by Mr Todd and that fact helped to secure a station: there.

Canoeing in Upper Hutt - Talking about big floods in the past, would it surprise you to know that on one occasion the Maoris of Maori Bank (no Maoris there now) came to the Upper Hutt sale yards site in a canoe.

(Reference Papers past website Evening Post newspaper 30 April 1931 page 9)
