

## FATALITY AT CIRCUS

### THE TENT HAND'S DEATH.

#### CORONER'S FINDING.

The inquest on the body of the young man Laurie Raymond, a tent hand employed at Wirth's Circus, who was killed by a falling pole when assisting in dismantling the menagerie tent on the Hobart Domain on Wednesday evening, was concluded in the City Police Court on Saturday. Two fellow employees of the deceased gave evidence concerning the fatality, at the conclusion of which the Coroner (Mr. E. W. Turner) returned a verdict that the deceased's death was due to injuries caused by the tent pole falling upon him by the guy rope being unloosed by some person without authority. Mr. Turner added that from the evidence it appeared that the deceased met his death through the unwarranted interference of some unauthorised person, who unloosed the guy rope, thus causing the fall of the pole, and if the police discovered the culprit further steps could be taken.

Chief Detective-Inspector Oakes conducted the inquiry on behalf of the police.

Dr. V. R. Ratten, surgeon superintendent of the Public Hospital, said that Raymond was admitted to the hospital about 8.45 p.m. on Wednesday in a dying condition, and died 25 minutes later. His death was due to hemorrhage of the lungs and fracture of the skull.

Sydney Rose, chief tent hand at Wirth's Circus, said that Raymond was a native of New Zealand, and joined the circus in 1924. The tent, which ordinarily contained the menagerie, was being dismantled under his direction about 8.20 on Wednesday night, and the deceased was engaged in unlacing one section. Witness heard a crash, and turning round saw the deceased plumed beneath the pole. The pole was supported in position by four

pole was supported in position by four main guy ropes, fastened to pegs in the ground. The peg which held the main guy rope was bent over and burred at the top, and witness had examined it but a few minutes before the rope came loose. He was unable to say who loosened the rope. There were between 300 and 400 people present at the time, and any one of them might have done it.

Vaina Tamppinen, second tent hand, said that he was supervising the packing of the managerie tent. He heard someone call "stand clear," and turning he saw the pole collapse and strike the deceased. It pinned him to the ground by the neck and shoulders. He had been unable to discover anyone who had tampered with the guy rope. All the men engaged in packing the tent were experienced, and some unauthorised person must have touched the rope.

Detective Oakes said that several plainclothes constables were present at the circus when the accident occurred, but although they made searching inquiries they were unable to discover any person that had interfered with the rope.

Before leaving Hobart Mr. Philip Wirth, governing director of Wirth's, ordered an order for a headstone with inscription to be erected over the late Laurie Raymond's grave at Cornelian Bay Cemetery.