

**RYDE WOMAN FOUND DEAD**  
**Widow of Railway Accident Victim**

On Wednesday evening Mrs. **Ruby Doris SAUNDERS**, aged 43, was found dead in a room in which gas was escaping at her home, 23, Lower Highland-Road, Ryde. She had recently returned from Wales, where she had been staying with relatives. Mrs. SAUNDERS was the widow of Mr. Dudley SAUNDERS, a linesman employed by British Railways, who was killed when struck by a train near the esplanade entrance to Ryde tunnel on Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> of last year.

Mrs. SAUNDERS was discovered by her brother-in-law, Mr. E. SOTHCOTT, who had called on her, and, failing to get into the house, looked through the window and saw that she was dead. A post mortem has been ordered by the Coroner, and if it is necessary it will be held at the Royal I.W. County Hospital.

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**RYDE WOMAN'S SAD DEATH**  
**No Evidence of Suicide**

At an inquest at the Royal I.W. County Hospital on Tuesday, lasting two hours on Mrs. **Ruby Doris SAUNDERS**, (43), of 23 Lower Highland-Road, Ryde, who was found dead in her gas-filled scullery on Wednesday week, the Coroner (Mr. J.V. BULLIN) said he had found a great deal of difficulty in coming to a conclusion. Mrs. SAUNDERS was the widow of Mr. Dudley SAUNDERS, a linesman, who was killed instantaneously last September when struck by a train while working on the railway at the Esplanade entrance to Ryde tunnel. Dr. P. D. SWINSTEAD said he made a post mortem examination. There were no injuries and all the organs were normal. Death was due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

**BROTHER-IN-LAW'S DISCOVERY**

Mr. Edward John SOUTHCOTT, a carpenter, of 11 Great Preston-Road, Ryde, Mrs. SAUNDERS' brother-in-law, said that about 5.50 pm on Wednesday week he went to her house to take her some vegetables. He was accustomed to going to see her every day, but it was usually earlier in the evening. There was a passage door which was always kept locked and he gave his usual knock, but did not get an answer. He looked through the letter-box, but did not smell anything. When he looked the second time there was a faint smell of gas. He cut out a small pane of glass in the door and was able to turn the key. On entering he saw her body on the scullery floor. The gas tap were off, but the oven tap was three quarters on. The oven door was open and a box of matches was lying directly in front of it. From the position of the body he formed the opinion that Mrs. SAUNDERS had been taken ill while bending down to light the stove and had fallen back and collapsed. On top of the gas stove was a dish containing some vegetables and in his opinion she had been going to put it into the oven to warm up. The night before her death he was with her at his home when she was making plans for Easter and told him what she would like in her garden. She was then quite happy and she had never threatened to take her life. She returned home after staying with her brother in Wales about a month or three weeks ago and had spoke about going back to Wales. She had no financial worries.

**LIABLE TO FAINTING FITS**

Dr. L.P. FIRMAN-EDWARDS J.P., said that Mrs. SAUNDERS had been a patient of his

for about 15 years. Before her husband's death she had been subject to anaemia and liable to fainting attacks. Since an operation her general condition seemed to be much better and she had not since complained of any fainting fits. She was a type of person who might be subject to fainting attacks through emotional causes or being in a close atmosphere. He was called to her after her husband's death and found her completely prostrated, so much so that one could not reason with her on the following afternoon, and she was in that condition for several days and kept calling out for her husband. She never made any attempt at suicide or any threats. That went on for four or five days and then she suddenly pulled herself together and seemed to get a grip on herself and went to stay with her sister in Haylands for a few days. She then returned to her home, and the last time he saw her was on October 20<sup>th</sup>, a few days before she left for Wales. She never entered Whitecroft Hospital, although at one time he feared they might have to send her there. When he saw her in October he could not form an opinion that she would take her life. She was a woman of high principles and she seemed much more reasoned, taking a more spiritual view of things, and he thought she was helped a lot by her relatives.

Miss Margaret HUNT, of 28 High-Street, Oakfield, said Mrs. SAUNDERS was her aunt. She had been sleeping in the house to keep her company since the week after she returned from Wales. Her aunt never mentioned taking her life and witness never thought she might do so. Witness left for work at 8.55 a.m. on Wednesday week. She had breakfast with her aunt and she talked about what she was going to do during the afternoon and they spoke about of going to see a television programme in the evening. Her aunt said she would be in all day and mentioned about going to see relatives at Easter and that she thought she would arrange to let the house during the summer.

Mrs. Barbara Mary MONAGHAN, of 9 High-Street, Oakfield, said she visited her aunt on Wednesday week at about 11.30 a.m. with her dinner. Witness tapped on the door, but it was locked. She looked through the letter-box and saw the oven door was open, but did not smell gas. She thought her aunt had gone out to see friends, as she had mentioned to her that she might do so. Witness then left the house, but returned about 1.30 p.m. to see if her aunt had come back, but the situation was the same.

P.C. WATMORE said that he found a small amount of vomit beside the body. The oven door was wide open and there was a smell of gas, although it was not very strong. Dr. GIBSON arrived and formed the opinion that Mr. SAUNDERS had been dead for some hours.

The Coroner said it was a most distressing case and he must admit that he had found a great deal of difficulty in coming to a conclusion. He recorded a verdict of death by misadventure, the actual cause being coal gas poisoning. He extended sympathy with the relatives, who quite obviously had looked after her very well indeed.

## THE FUNERAL

The Vicar (the Rev. A.J. PEARMAN) officiated at the funeral service at St. John's Church, Ryde, on Wednesday. The mourners were Mr. and Mrs. C. Mr. and Mrs. A., and Mr. and Mrs. R. BUTT (brothers and sisters-in-law), Mr. S. BUTT (brother), Mr. and Mrs. E. HUNT, Mr. and Mrs. E. SOUTHCOTT, and Mr. and Mrs. W. DOUGHERTY (brothers-in-law and sisters), Mr. H. SAUNDERS (brother-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. Arthur WILLIAMS (uncle and aunt), Mr. C. BUTT (cousin), Mr. T. MONAGHAN (nephew), Miss J. HUNT (niece), and Mrs. G. PALMER. The interment was in her husband's grave at Ryde Cemetery, and there were over 20 floral tributes.

Messrs. J. WHEELER and Sons made the arrangements.

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