

**SAD CASE OF SUICIDE AT RYDE**

On Tuesday morning Elsie COTTON, a domestic servant in the employ of Miss **Alice Sarah Elizabeth WALLIS**, living at Swanmore Road, Ryde, found her mistress hanging dead from the bannisters. Deceased was at once cut down by Mr GRANT, a neighbour, and medical assistance sent for, but the unfortunate lady had been dead for some eight hours. It appears that she had been suffering from delusions with regard to money matters for some time, thinking that she had spent too much, and would be imprisoned for debt. She was 35 years of age, and until a year ago, lived with her aunt, Ms. LUPTON, who died at that time.

INQUEST.

The inquest was held on Miss WALLIS at the Partlands Hotel, on Wednesday, before the Deputy Coroner (Mr. E F. BLAKE), Mr. F.N. BRODERICK, was chosen forman of the jury.

Elsie COTTON, domestic servant, said that she had been in the employ of the deceased for the last six months. She and the deceased were the sole occupants of the house. On Monday evening deceased went to bed at about 9 o'clock. As she also did on Sunday evening. That was about an hour earlier than she generally retired. On the following morning witness got up at about 7 o'clock, and came down the back stairs. When she got to the foot of the front staircase she saw Miss WALLIS's shoes. On looking up she saw the deceased. She went up the stairs, thinking that deceased had fallen, and found her hanging to the bannisters. Deceased was quite cold, and witness went immediately for assistance. Deceased had been very much depressed for about a week. She had not been out much. She thought that she was in debt, and would be locked up. She imagined that she had been living extravagantly.

Mr. MURRAY, trustee of the deceased, said, in answer to the Coroner, that this was not so in fact.

William Edward GRANT, head master of the Ryde Upper Grade School, and living next door to the deceased, said that on Tuesday morning he was called by the last witness at about twenty minutes past 7. He knew deceased by sight, but had never spoken to her. He went into the house, and found deceased hanging by the neck from a rope attached to the bannisters. She was quite dead. He cut the body down and went at once for Dr. MACKENZIE.

Christopher MURRAY, living at Shanklin, said he was one of the trustees of the deceased, who had means of her own. He called on her, with his sister-in-law, twice last week. On Wednesday she was depressed. They went for a walk to Quarr, and on their return deceased accompanied them to the railway station. On Saturday she appeared excited, and thought she had been living extravagantly, which was not a fact. Witness remonstrated with her, and told her of her position, when she seemed more composed. On Monday afternoon, witness came over on purpose to see deceased. She appeared then to be much more cheerful. Deceased had lost her aunt, with whom she had been living for years, about 10 months ago. She felt the loss very much.

Mr. K.W. Ingleby MACKENZIE said he did not know the deceased. On Tuesday morning he was sent for at about 20 minutes to 8. When he arrived at the house, he found deceased lying in the passage quite dead. Part of the rope was still round her neck, outside her dress. The noose was a large one. There was a pocket-handkerchief as well tied tightly round her neck and a lace scarf outside that. Witness had no doubt that deceased died from suffocation. She must have been dead eight or ten hours.

The Coroner, in summing up, said he did not think the jury would have much difficulty in coming to a conclusion. It was apparent, from the evidence of the servant and of Mr. MURRAY, that deceased had had, during the last few days, certain delusions. She had told the servant that she thought she had been extravagant, and would be sent to prison. From the evidence of the trustee it appeared absolutely unreasonable that she should have had those ideas, as she was in comfortable circumstances.

The jury unanimously returned a verdict of "Suicide while of unsound mind."

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