

**ELDERLY WOMAN FOUND IN THE SEA
OPEN VERDICT AT RYDE INQUEST**

The Coroner (Mr. J.V. BULLIN) recorded an open verdict at the inquest at the Town Hall, Ryde, on Tuesday, on Miss Rosina Jessie BROWN, aged 73, of 97 Monkton Street, Ryde. Miss BROWN'S body was recovered from the sea off Ryde pier head on Friday week.

Ivy Dorothy BROWN said she lived with her sister, a retired telephonist, and they both came to Ryde in June, 1958. Her sister had had no serious illness, and was cheerful, apart from being worried about a troublesome pain in her knee. On Friday week she was perfectly normal and went for a walk at 11.30 a.m. When she did not return to lunch at one-o'clock they became worried and at 1.30 p.m. went to look for her. They telephoned the hospital at 2.15 p.m. and the police at 2.30 in case she had met with an accident. Recently her sister had complained of bad headaches and giddiness. She was certain that her sister did not commit suicide.

TALKED OF HOLIDAY

Smaragda SHIER, of 5 Monkton Street, Ryde, wife of the proprietor of a newsagent's shop in Monkton Street, said that Miss BROWN called on her that day, as she usually did, for a talk at about 11.30 a.m. and left at 12.5 or 12.10 p.m. Miss BROWN did not seem worried and talked about her forthcoming holiday. She said her leg was a little painful, but when witness suggested she should rest it she replied "A little walk won't hurt me."

HEART CONDITION

Dr. P.D. SWINSTEAD (pathologist) said a post mortem examination showed that everything was normal except that the heart was not in very good condition. It might have caused a certain amount of trouble but there was no major defect. He could not rule out a heart attack, but there was nothing definite to prove it. Death was due to drowning.

Sidney George CROCKFORD, of 9 Chapel Road, Binstead, a charge-hand carpenter employed by British Railways on Ryde pier, said that at 12.30 p.m. on Friday week when he was having his lunch in his hut at the pier head another employee, Mr. DILNUTT drew his attention to something floating in the sea about 30 to 35 yards off the pier head, and he saw it was a body. Witness rowed out and recovered the full-clothed body of an elderly woman floating face downwards. He had not seen her on the pier, but it was quite possible for a person to fall from one of the landing stages without being noticed. From his knowledge of the tides he thought she might have fallen into the water at Sandy slip.

Dr. G.L.P. CRAMPTON said Miss BROWN was a patient of his, and he last saw her on April 10th. He would have been very surprised if she had taken her own life.

Police Inspector F.L. ALLEN said that inquiries by police officer had failed to find anyone who had seen Miss BROWN after she had left Mrs. SHIER'S shop.

In recording his verdict the Coroner said Miss BROWN certainly did not sound like anybody who would have taken her own life. It might have been that she was on the slipway and had a giddy attack and fell into the sea, or she may have gone in to help some animal as he learned she was very fond of animals. He expressed sympathy with the relatives and appreciation of the prompt action of Mr. CROCKFORD.
