

**RYDE WIDOW TOOK HER OWN LIFE
WORRIED OVER EVICTION ORDER**

A 73- year-old Ryde widow who had lived in the same house for over 40 years was so distressed when she received an eviction order from the Town Council that she gassed herself. the story was told to an inquest at Ryde Town Hall on Wednesday on Mrs. **Maude Rose HICKMAN**, of 10 Alfred Street, who was found dead by her brother on Saturday. The Coroner (Mr. J. V. BULLIN), recording a verdict that Mrs. HICKMAN killed herself while the balance of her mind was temporarily disturbed by worry, said he was satisfied that Mrs. HICKMAN received every possible consideration from the local authority and the landlord.

Rex BESSANT, of 45 Weeks road, Ryde, said he found his sister lying on the hearth rug in the living room with her head on a pillow. A gas tap was turned on and the open end of a tube rested beside her face. The door and window were shut. She had been very worried about the demolition order and eviction notice until she saw the town clerk, but at no time gave any indication that she would take her life.- In reply to the town clerk (Mr. E. S. SHEPPARD) witness said he understood from his sister that the council had offered her alternative accommodation in Oakfield which she did not think was suitable.

Reginald LUGG, borough housing manager, said Mrs. HICKMAN saw him on December 5th a few hours after receiving the eviction order and appeared to be very worried. He advised her to see the town clerk. On December 9th he went to her home to offer her a flatlet in Oakfield as he thought it would ease her mind, but she did not appear to want to leave the area.

The town clerk said that the council had no option but to make a demolition order. They always dealt with such cases as sympathetically as they could and although he had to serve the eviction order when Mrs. HICKMAN came to him he emphasised that it was a formality and she would never be thrown out into the street. She seemed quite relieved and he thought her mind was at rest when she left. he expressed sympathy on behalf of the council, saying her husband had been an esteemed employee for many years.
