

Albert Church

Rushworth Chronicle

16 November, 1934

Tragedy at Moora

MAN FOUND WITH HIS THROAT CUT

On Monday last Mr. L. Ristrom from went to the Moora weighbridge with a load of wood. Being just on lunch time he thought he would go into the office and have his meal. He found the door locked and looked through the window, was horrified to see the dead body of a man lying on the floor.

He immediately communicated with Mrs. Campbell at the Moora Receiving Office [post office and telephone exchange] and on the door being opened, the body was recognised as being that of Mr. Albert Church, a well-known resident of Moora.

His throat was cut and one of his wrists had a deep gash on it. It is surmised that he had been dead for about nine hours.

Rushworth police were communicated with and the body was brought into Rushworth. An enquiry was held before Mr. Crothers, J.P., and adjourned until today (Friday).

The late Mr. Church was well known in the town and district, and had resided at Moora for about 13 years. He was employed as a carter for the Perry Sawmill Co., and was a good worker and of an unassuming nature.

The remains were interred in the Rushworth Cemetery on Wednesday, the burial service being conducted by the Rev W. A. Williams, the funeral arrangements being carried out by Messrs Whitaker and Diggle.

Rushworth Chronicle

23 November, 1934

The Moora tragedy

The inquest

The adjourned inquest concerning the death of Mr Albert V. Church, whose dead body was found in the office attached to the weighbridge at the Erwen railway station, Moora, on Tuesday last week, was held on Friday morning at the Courthouse, Rushworth, before Mr. D. Crothers, J.P., when the following evidence was given:

Frederick Clarke Church stated that he was a poultry farm residing at Eaglehawk. He had seen the body of deceased. It was that of Albert Victor Church. Deceased was his brother. He last saw him alive about seven years ago. Deceased was a single man and was 54 years of age and resided at Moora.

Dr. C. H. Dickson, Rushworth, deposed that about 1.30 p.m. on 13th November in response to a telephone message received he went to the weighbridge house at Erwen railway station and there viewed the body of a man known to him as Albert Church. The body was that of an elderly man of good nutrition, lying supine with the forearm flexed at the elbows and the knees drawn up. The clothing was disarranged. Pools of blood were on the floor of

the building and there was a bloodstain on the wall. A razor was lying on the floor about two feet from the right-hand. Rigor mortis had developed and the body was cold. In his opinion death occurred about eight hours prior to his viewing the body. Examination revealed a deep cut extending to the bones of the forearm and situated about two inches above the left wrist. In addition there was a large wound to the anterior portion of the neck with severance of the neck structures to the vertebral column. No internal examination of the body was made. In his opinion death was due to haemorrhage following wounds of the wrist and neck. The nature of the wounds was consistent with their self-infliction with a razor.

Christopher Stephen Hannah stated that he was a wood carter residing at Moora. He last saw deceased alive about 4.30 a.m. or 5 a.m. on 13th November. Deceased and himself were then talking in the room. He went to sleep again awoke between 7 and 7.30 a.m. The deceased was not then in the room. He did not see him about after 5 a.m. Deceased did not at any time threaten to take his life. He had no financial worries that he was aware of. Deceased and himself were talking about going to work at 5 a.m. When he awoke at 7.30 a.m. the fire was alight. The razor produced was deceased's property. It was usually kept at the camp.

Lancelot Risstrom stated that he was a farmer and resided at Moora road, Rushworth. At about 1.15 p.m. on November 13th he went to the weighbridge office at Erwen railway station. He tried the door but could not open it. He then looked through the window into the office and saw the body of the deceased lying on the floor in a pool of blood. He informed the men employed on Perry's sawmill and then phoned for the police. The door was jammed but not locked.

First-Constable Warren stated about 5 p.m. on November 13th from information received he went to the Erwen weighbridge office of the Erwen railway station. On the floor of the office he saw the body of deceased. It was lying on its back. The floor was covered with blood. There was also blood on the desk and wall. The razor produced was lying on the floor about three feet from deceased's head on the right side. The case was on the desk at the end of the office. Deceased's throat and left wrist were cut. The body was fully clothed, excepting a coat. He had made enquiries but could find no suspicious circumstances.

A verdict was returned that the deceased (Albert Church) had died at Moora on the 13th day of November from haemorrhage, following wounds of the neck and wrist, the wounds being self-inflicted.