

A sad accident, resulting in the death of Mr Andrew Spence occurred on Saturday evening last. He had come to the township on business and was returning home along the Stanhope road when he fell into a digger's hole, about eight feet deep, that had recently been sunk just off the track. He lay where he fell for about two hours, when his cries attracted the attention of Mr A. Dunn, who procured assistance, and he was taken to Mr D. Cameron's.

From the first it was seen that he was seriously injured, but he lingered on till Monday morning before death put an end to his suffering. The deceased was an old resident of Rushworth, and the respect in which he was held was fully shown by the number of friends who followed the remains to their last resting place in the local cemetery on Wednesday.

The Rev. Mr Weir officiated at the grave. The funeral arrangements were in charge of Mr Medhurst.

MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

An inquiry was held at Mr C. Cameron's, Moora, on Monday last, before Mr W. Wigg, J.P., touching the death of Andrew Spence, who had expired the same morning from the result of an accident.

Alexander Strange Dunn deposed—I am a corn merchant residing at Rushworth and I also have a farm at Moora. I have viewed the body, the subject of this inquiry, and identify it as that of Andrew Spence, miner, Rushworth. On the 25th inst., about 6 p.m., deceased stopped at my place of business and asked me if I were going home. I replied, "Not for some time yet," and he then said he would go home alone. I heard him walk away and he appeared to be quite steady. Just before 8 p.m. I left the shop to go to my farm. After going about a mile along the Stanhope road I heard a groan. The sound seemed to proceed from a hole. I stopped for a little time, but hearing nothing more I then went on for a few steps, when I heard the groans again. I then thought that someone must have fallen into a hole.

I went to Mr Cameron's house and got a light. Mr Cameron and I made a search and found deceased in a hole about eight feet deep. I asked him if he was hurt and he said his back was bad. We got a short ladder and put it down the hole and deceased walked up it. Deceased told me that he tripped over a mullock heap and rolled into the hole. I assisted him to Mr Cameron's.

Dugald Cameron corroborated Mr Dunn's evidence, and in addition deposed—I drove him to Mr C. Cameron's on Sunday. He walked to the trap but had to be assisted. In going along he said, "Dugald, I am cooked this time." Deceased was about 66 years of age.

Dr Heily deposed—I have known the deceased for nearly thirty years. He has been out of health for some time, but the immediate cause of his death was shock to his system through falling into the hole.

George Spence, on oath, said, I am a contractor, and reside in Rushworth. I identify the body as that of my father, Andrew Spence. He has resided with his son-in-law, Colin Cameron, for about three years. He was born in Fifeshire, Scotland, and was about 66 years of age. He leaves a widow, four sons and one daughter, all grown up.

A verdict in accordance with the medical testimony was given.