

Elizabeth Hicks

Murchison Advertiser

22 February, 1907

Magisterial Inquiry.

A magisterial inquiry was held at the court-house, Rushworth, on Saturday last, Dr Christie, J. P., touching the death of Elizabeth Hicks, whose body was found hanging at her residence on the previous day.

Mary Smith, a neighbour, deposed that about half past eleven a.m. on the 15th February, from something she was told, she got through the front window of deceased's house. She went that into the bedroom and then into the dining room.

Here she saw the body of deceased hanging by the neck from a rafter. She sent for the police. She had known deceased for about 22 years, and she appeared to be in the best of health until last winter. Since then she had been peculiar. She last saw her alive on the 14th inst. Deceased did not appear to be of sound mind for some time past. She was about 67 years of age.

Senior-Constable O'Brien deposed that on the 15th inst., about 12.15 p.m., he went to deceased's residence owing to information received. She was registrar of births and deaths. On going into the dining room he found deceased suspended from a rafter by a rope the end of which had been fastened around her neck. She had stood on a chair and kicked the chair away. The chair was lying overturned on the floor. The body was cold and life appeared to have been extinct for about 18 hours. He learnt from inquiries that deceased had been seen about on the morning of the previous day.

He had visited deceased's place within the past month and she appeared to be greatly distressed over some correspondence which she had received, he found two scraps of paper in the house, one on the table and the other on the mantelpiece. One read "I cannot go on", the other read "Tell Walbran's to give my brother his watch, and the box is his and furniture. I am dreadful; I cannot go on. Give him the money, Mr Brien. Please do.—E.H." He also found a letter addressed to Mr H. Hicks, care of T. Cambridge, Market Square, Bendigo. This letter was as follows:—

"Dear Harry,—I was SO anxious over the cases at the court that I thought I would see how I got, but they sent up some quarterly papers and I have made some di e-tdful mistakes and I have had to amend them. I fear the worst.— Bessie."

The finding was that the deceased, Elizabeth Sarah Hicks, committed suicide by hanging on the 14th inst., being at the time of unsound mind.

Footnote: Rushworth cemetery records include a listing for Elizabeth Hicks.