

James Lawrie

The Argus

16 February, 1898

FATAL GUN ACCIDENT. AN UNFORTUNATE FAMILY.

RUSHWORTH, Tuesday.

A young man named Lawrie, a son of Mrs. James Lawrie, farmer, Moora, was accidentally shot yesterday while returning home with a load of water. He had his gun with him, and it is supposed that it was slipping out of the front of the dray, and in dragging it in again by the barrel the hammer caught on the crossbar, and the gun going off the charge was lodged in his groin. He died within three hours.

Mrs. Lawrie has been singularly unfortunate. Her eldest son some years since was killed at the back door of her dwelling by a log falling on him.

Not long after her husband met his death by a horse bolting and capsizing the dray in which he was riding, close to the front of the house. And now her eldest surviving son has lost his life also within yards of the dwelling.

The remains were followed to the Rushworth Cemetery this afternoon by a large number of mourners.

Rushworth Chronicle

18 February, 1898

A SAD GUN ACCIDENT.

On Monday last Mrs James Lawrie, of Moora, lost another member of her family through accident, this being the third within a period of fourteen years.

This time it was her second son, James George, aged about 15 years, and the cause of his death was a gunshot wound, sustained in a very simple manner. He went out to bring a load of water and seeing some ducks in a dam returned for his gun. He came back with the water, and while backing the dray against a stick the horse gave a start and the jerk caused the gun to explode, the charge entering poor young Lawrie's abdomen, inflicting a terrible wound, from the effects of which he died in about three hours. The unfortunate young man was able to tell his distracted mother how the accident occurred, notwithstanding the terrible nature of his injuries.

Mrs Lawrie's trials have been great, and the deepest sympathy is felt for her in this, the latest great trouble she has experienced. It is some fourteen years since she lost her oldest son, a lad five or six years of age, through an accident. The little fellow was playing at a chock and log fence not far from the house and the top log fell upon him and crushed him to death.

About nine years later her husband was killed a few yards away from the front door, the horse he was driving bolting and capsizing the dray on to him. Thus she has had husband and two sons killed close to the home—a series of misfortunes extremely sad, the bitterness of one blow having hardly been removed by time that another has occurred to renew her grief.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, a large number of friends and sympathisers joining in the

cortege, which was a very lengthy one, including some 40 or 50 buggies, several horsemen, and others, who joined the funeral when it reached Rushworth, followed on foot.

The funeral rites were conducted by the Rev. Mr Weir and the mortuary arrangements were carried out by Mr G. Anderson.

MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

A magisterial inquiry was held by Dr Heily on Tuesday last to ascertain the cause of the death of James George Lawrie, of Moora, who was killed by a gunshot wound on the previous day.

Dr Christie deposed that he made a post-mortem examination on the body of J. G. Lawrie. He found a wound four inches long in the right groin. The internal organs in that part of the body were pierced with shot. The abdominal cavity contained a large quantity of blood. All the other portions of the body were healthy. Death was caused by haemorrhage and shock brought about by a gunshot wound.

Agnes Jane Lawrie deposed that deceased was her brother. On the day previous he went away alone to the channel for a load of water. She did not see him come back for his gun. She was at dinner when he returned the next time. She heard the report of a gun and ran out immediately after her mother and saw her brother sitting in the dray. He had a rein in each hand. He told them he was shot. He said that the dray had run back against a stick and the starting of the horse again had sent the gun off. She helped her mother to remove him from the dray.

William Robert Lawrie deposed that he saw his brother return for the gun. The gun produced was the one he took. He saw him returning with the water. He was alone.

Mrs Lawrie deposed that the deceased was her son and was not yet 16 years of age. About 11.30 a.m. he went to the channel for a load of water. He returned home and got the gun to shoot some ducks he saw in the channel. He returned with the water about twenty minutes to one o'clock. He was sitting on a milk can in the dray. She heard a report of a gun and then deceased called out to her. She ran out. He was still sitting on the can. He had hold of the reins in either hand. The gun was stock outwards in the front of the dray as though it would fall to the ground. The deceased told her that, he was backing the horse to put the dray against a stick when the animal went forward and the jerk sent the gun off. She helped to assist him to the ground and afterwards on to a bed and sent for medical assistance. The cause of death was purely accidental. Only one barrel of the gun went off. The other had been fired at the ducks. The deceased was used to carrying firearms.

The verdict returned was that death resulted from the effects of a gunshot wound accidentally caused.