

James Ryan

Waranga Chronicle

9 October, 1879

A magisterial inquiry was held on Monday, the 6th inst., by W. Wigg, Esq., J. P., on the body of a youth named James Ryan, a son of Jeremiah Ryan, farmer, Girgarre.

The following is the substance of the evidence taken.

Jeremiah Ryan deposed, the deceased was my son, and was about 18 years of age. On Saturday morning, at the request of my housekeeper, deceased went to a well situated some three chains from my residence, to draw some water, and was not seen about the house for the rest of the day; no anxiety was felt at deceased's absence, as it was supposed that he had gone to look after the cattle. On my return home from Waranga in the evening I was told that the lad was away and made search on one or two farms in the neighbourhood where he was in the habit of frequenting, but hearing no tidings of him I returned to the well, and after searching for some time deceased's body was drawn out.

It is believed that the deceased dropped the bucket into the well, and in trying to get it out must have fallen in himself. The lad was always of weak intellect, and he might have become giddy and fallen forward while looking down the well.

The well was securely enclosed, and every precaution had been taken to ensure safety.

Mrs Isabella Hogan confirmed the father's evidence, and also stated that the lad was on the best of terms with all at home on the morning of the accident.

After hearing the medical evidence a verdict of accidental death from drowning was returned.

Footnote: Rushworth cemetery records include a listing for James Ryan.