

SAD FATAL ACCIDENT.

Quite a shock went through Rushworth on Monday afternoon last when it became known that Mr James Lawrie, farmer, of Moora, had come by his death through the capsizing of his dray.

It appears that he was returning home a little before 12 o'clock after having delivered a load of chaff, and when about a quarter of a mile from his own home the horses he was driving were startled by the noise of a buggy coming behind them and bolted, eventually running the dray against a tree and capsizing it, Mr Lawrie being pinned under the frame.

He was extricated as quickly as possible by his wife and brother-in-law, who had witnessed the accident, and Dr Heily was sent for. The unfortunate man expired about 10 minutes after the doctor's arrival.

A magisterial inquiry was held on Tuesday by Mr Wigg, J. P., when the following evidence was elicited:—

Alexander Crilly, brother-in-law of the deceased, deposed that on the previous day he was driving in a buggy behind the deceased, who was driving two horses in a framed dray, one of the horses being an "outrigger." When within about a quarter of a mile of home the horses took fright at hearing witness' buggy coming behind them and bolted. After having run a couple of hundred yards the horses ran the dray against a tree, capsizing it, and the frame fell across deceased's chest, pinning him to the ground. The horses got free of the harness and cleared out.

Witness obtained a lever and lifted the dray, and with the assistance of deceased's wife (who had witnessed the accident from the house) released him from his position. He was sensible, speaking to his wife and witness, and was taken home in the buggy. Witness went for the doctor, and deceased expired about 10 minutes after his return. The horse in the outrigger was in the habit of bolting, and deceased was aware of this. He was standing up in the dray and doing his best to control the horses at the time of the accident, and was perfectly sober.

Mrs Lawrie, wife of the deceased, deposed to witnessing the accident and the subsequent death of her husband.

Dr Heily deposed that the ribs were broken on both sides, injuring the lungs, and the neck and spine close to the head were also hurt. The injuries were very great, causing almost instant collapse. Witness saw the dray after the accident. The reins were broken, the hand ends being fast to the frame. This would lessen the power to control the horses. The outrigger horse had apparently bored the shaft horse against the tree, thus causing the accident. Deceased was a steady and industrious man, and a good neighbour.

A verdict of death from injuries received by the overturning of a dray was returned.

The respect in which the deceased gentleman was held was shown on Wednesday, when one of the largest processions ever seen in the district followed his remains to their last resting place in the Rushworth cemetery. The Rev. J. Weir, B.A., officiated at the grave, and the funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr Anderson.

DEATH.

LAURIE.—On the 26th September, accidentally killed, James, the dearly beloved husband of Sarah Laurie, of Wanalta, and beloved fourth son of Peter and Helen Laurie, of Wanalta and Green Hill, Kyneton. Aged 41 years. Deeply mourned.

Dead! is he gone? Alas ! can it be?
But a few hours ago bright and happy was he.
Tears will not avail, it is useless to fret.
But a parting like that we will never forget.

—Inserted by his sorrowing wife, father, mother, sisters, and brothers.

There is a James Laurie in Rushworth cemetery records, in grave 168.