

## William Mann

Rushworth Chronicle

1 October, 1886

### MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

A magisterial inquiry was held at the Balaclava Hotel, Whroo, on Tuesday last, before W. Wigg, Esq., J.P., touching the death of a blacksmith named William Mann, who was found in an old shaft on the Balaclava Hill, Whroo. The following evidence was elicited:—

Robert Cameron deposed—Am a miner, residing at Whroo. Have viewed the body of the deceased, William Mann. Last saw him alive on the night of the 23rd inst. at the Balaclava Hotel, Whroo, about 11 o'clock. He asked me if I was going home, as he wished me to accompany him. He appeared perfectly sober, but I suspected he was in the horrors. On the following Saturday it was reported he was missing. He was not in his hut, and had not been seen since the night of the 24th inst.

Witness communicated with his uncle, John Mann, of Murchison, to know if he was there, and was informed he was not. Concluded he had committed suicide, as he had repeatedly threatened and attempted it. Some years ago deceased attempted to drown himself, and I rescued him. On Sunday last I assisted in searching for him, also on the following day, when the body was discovered by my brother. I had known the deceased for the last 25 years, during which time he was often intemperate. I have frequently known him to be in the horrors, and given into the custody of the police for due restraint after the effects of drink. Deceased was a blacksmith by trade, and resided at Whroo for over 20 years. Know the shaft, which was well protected, and feel confident it would be impossible for anyone to fall into it accidentally. Deceased was 49 years of age and single; a native of Grangemouth (Scotland).

Hugh Cameron deposed — Am a miner, residing at Whroo. Have viewed the body of deceased, William Mann. Last saw him on the night of the 23rd inst., at the Balaclava Hotel. He was then sober. Did not see him again alive. Discovered the body about 3 p.m. on the 27th inst. at the bottom of an old shaft, about 50 yards from his hut. Not having seen deceased for several days it was feared he had committed suicide, as he threatened on previous occasions to destroy himself. I, in company with others, formed a search party on Monday last. After searching about two hours I found him as before stated. He was quite dead. The shaft was about 120 feet to where the body was found. It was securely enclosed. Do not think deceased could possibly have accidentally fallen into it.

A verdict was given that the deceased committed suicide by throwing himself down an old shaft on the Balaclava Hill, Whroo.

*Whroo cemetery interment list includes William Mann buried in 1886, aged 49.*