

### FOUND DROWNED

At the Footscray Court House on Tuesday an inquest was held by Mr G C Morrison, District Coroner, and a jury, touching the death of an old man named Thos. O'Rourke, who was reported missing since the 21st of May.

Robert Lawson Yewers, butcher, Nicholson street, Footscray, stated that he had known deceased for about 7 years. Saw the body that morning, and identified it as that of Thos. O'Rourke. He was caretaker of a farm at Braybrook belonging to witness. It was about four miles from Footscray, and deceased lived alone on the farm. Last saw deceased when he called at witness's shop, when he was perfectly sober. Did not think that he was addicted to drinking, but knew that he occasionally took a drink. Thought deceased was about 70 years of age, and did not know that he had any relations in the colony. As far as he knew, deceased was not mentally affected, the only eccentricity he exhibited, was a strong objection to anyone living with him. The farm was not near the river. Was quite positive of the identity of deceased; identified him by general appearance of the face.

Dr John Box, who made a post mortem examination the previous day, judged the deceased to be 55 years of age. He thought the body had been in the water 12 or 14 days. The body was in an advanced state of decomposition, but, as far as it was possible to judge, there were no signs of violence. He thought from the appearance of the internal organs, the deceased had in his time drunk a considerable quantity of beer. Death resulted from asphyxia, due to drowning. He might have been deceived in the age of deceased, as the body was so decomposed.

John George Williamson, porter at Braybrook, last saw deceased on Saturday, 21st ult, when he got out of the 11.10 p m. train from Spencer street. He wasn't quite sober, and told witness he had taken a few beers. The attention of witness was particularly drawn to him because he couldn't produce a ticket, and he charged him excess. When he was paying he produced a sovereign, a two shilling piece, and then sixpence, and witness gave him change. Judged him to be between 60 or 70 years of age. Did not see him again after he left the platform.

John Dals, butcher, Maribyrnong, stated that on Sunday he was rowing up the river with a friend, when a young man, who was riding along the bank, directed his attention to an object in the water, and he found that it was the

the water, and he found that it was the body of a man. The body was secured, and word sent to the police. He remained by the body until Constables Byrnes and Stephens arrived, at about ten o'clock that night. The body was found close by Blair's farm.

Mounted Constable Byrnes stated that information of the finding of the body was received by the police at about six o'clock on Sunday evening. On going up the river, in company with Constable Stephens, he found the body tied to a fence. It was fully clothed, but the hat was missing. The body was taken to the Footscray morgue, and on searching the clothing, he found in the trousers pocket, a sovereign, eleven shillings and 4½d. The police had made enquiries as to relatives, but could not trace any. Heard that deceased had a brother in Hawthorn, but did not hear that he had two nephews in Fitzroy. The farm of which deceased was a caretaker, is about two mile from the river but the slaughter yard belonging to the same owner is near the river.

The following verdict was returned:—  
" Found drowned, but there is not sufficient evidence to show how deceased got into the water."