

*Ashburton Guardian*. 11 June 1924 (Papers Past) [18/02/2025]

### **SUPPOSED POISONING.**

TIMARU, June 10.

Michael P. Angland, aged thirty-five years, married, with three children, died to-day under circumstances pointing to suicide. Deceased left a letter expressing his intention to do away with himself. Some strychnine was found in one of his pockets.

*Press*. 11 June 1924 (Papers Past) [23/07/2015]

### **Suicide.**

At about 3 p.m. yesterday a man named Michael Angland, aged about 30, walked into No. 45 Heaton street, Timaru, and told the lady of the house that he had just taken poison, and wished to lie down. He lay down on a couch, and immediately Dr. Usher was called in. The doctor found Angland dead. He had taken a large dose of a certain poison. He was separated from his wife and family, and leaves a widow and three children, ranging in age from ten years downwards. Deceased had been in New Zealand for about fourteen years, and his widow and family reside in Timaru. Up till a few days ago Angland had been rabbiting at Albury. An inquest will be held at 10 o'clock this morning.

*Timaru Herald*. 13 June 1924 (Papers Past) [17/02/2025]

### **DEATH BY POISONING.**

#### **PREMEDITATED SUICIDE.**

An inquest touching upon the death of Michael Patrick Angland, a married man, aged 34 years, was held before the Coroner, Mr E. D. Mosley, S.M., at the Timaru Courthouse yesterday afternoon.

Senior Sergeant Fahey conducted the proceedings for the police. Mary Angland, wife of the deceased, deposed that on Tuesday, June 10th, her husband returned from the country, at about 11.30 a.m., and went to in Buchanan Street. Their relations of late had not been too happy, and it had been her intention to apply for a separation order against him at the sitting of the Court that day. Deceased asked her to withdraw the application, but witness refused. Her husband said that if she went on with the case, he would execute his threat; which she thought, meant his going away out of the country. He pulled a bottle out of his pocket and poured some white powder into his hand. Witness caught hold of his hand, and prevented him taking it. He poured it back into the bottle and said that to save any trouble he would do it elsewhere. Deceased said goodbye, and after kissing the boy, went away. Witness called him back, and told him not to go away with that thought in his head. He said that the thought had been in his head for three or four weeks, and he could not help it. It was then about two o'clock. Witness consulted a neighbour, and was advised to communicate with the police, which she did. Deceased was 34 years of age, and at the time was rabbiting. There were three children, aged 11, 8, and 3 years.

Mrs M. Speirs, a married woman, living with her husband in Heaton Street, stated that on Tuesday afternoon, deceased called at her house about 3 o'clock. He sat down and said that his head was bad. Witness asked him to have an aspro, but deceased refused. He said he had not been drinking, but had taken some poison. He took a cup and had a drink, and asked if he could lie on the sofa in the front room. When he lay down, he was twitching a little. He told witness to leave him and go for a walk. Witness wanted to ring up for a doctor, but he said that he had not taken enough poison. Witness went back to the kitchen, until she heard him groaning. He still refused assistance, and again asked her to go out for a walk. Witness tried to give him some milk, but could not keep him still enough to take it. Witness went out, but could not see anybody about, so went over to her sister, who rang for the doctor. When she

returned she felt his heart and thought that he was dead. Deceased had been in her house about fifteen minutes before he died. Witness did not see him take any poison.

L. B. James gave evidence as to deceased purchasing strychnine from his shop. He had stated that other rabbiters were getting better results from poisoning, and asked for some strychnine. He was supplied with half an ounce, which he signed for in the usual manner. There were four drams in the bottle, which now only contained two drams. He considered that one grain was sufficient to kill a man.

G. H. Ussher, medical practitioner, stated that at about 3.15 p.m., on Tuesday, he proceeded to Mrs Spier's residence, in Heaton Street, in response to a message received. On arrival he found deceased lying on a couch. Life was extinct. The bottle produced in Court was found in his inside pocket. The following day, he made a post mortem examination of the body, which was that of a well-developed man. The organs were all healthy, and death had obviously not resulted from natural causes. In view of the evidence, and the state of the organs, he would consider that death was a result of strychnine poisoning.

A verdict was returned that deceased met his death as a result of strychnine poisoning, self administered. The Coroner stated that he was unable to say that deceased's mind had been unbalanced when he committed the act. Letters that he had left behind showed plainly that he was fully aware of what he was about.

*Press.* 13 June 1924 (Papers Past) [19/04/2018]

#### **Inquest.**

An inquest into the circumstances of the death of Michael Patrick Angland, who took poison with fatal results on Tuesday last, was held before the District Coroner, Mr E. D. Mosley, yesterday afternoon.

Mary Jane Angland said that on Tuesday last her husband came home from the country and called at her house in Buchanan street at about 11.30 a.m. They were not very happy together, and she was to have taken separation proceedings yesterday. He wished her to stop the proceedings, but she refused. Angland pulled a bottle out of his pocket and poured some white powder into his hand. He was just about to put the powder into his mouth when witness ran round the table and caught his hand. Angland poured the powder back into the bottle and said that to save witness trouble he would take the powder elsewhere. Her husband then kissed the little boy and went away. Witness followed him to the door, remonstrating. Angland stated that he had had the idea in his head for three or four weeks, and could not stop it. That was the last time she saw him alive. It was then about 2 p.m. Witness then informed the police. Her husband was a rhabbiter, and was aged 34. There were three children, 11, 8, and 3 years of age, a girl and two boys.

Mabel Spiers, a resident of Heaton street, said that she knew Angland. He called at her house on the day of the suicide at about 3 p.m. He walked into the house, sat down, and said his head was bad. Witness offered him remedies, but he refused, and stated that he had taken poison. Angland then lay down on a sofa. Witness asked if she could get a doctor, but he refused, stating that he would be all right in a minute or so. He died a few minutes later.

L. B. James, chemist, said that Angland called at his shop on June 7th and purchased half an ounce of strychnine, signing for it in the usual way.

Dr. G. H. Ussher said that he went to Mrs Spiers's house on Tuesday afternoon and found Angland dead. From the evidence he had heard and from the post-mortem examination, he concluded that death had been caused by strychnine poisoning.

The Coroner brought in a verdict that death was caused by strychnine poisoning, self-administered. The deceased's state of mind was not unbalanced, as the letters found on the body were evidently written by a man who knew what he was doing.