

APPALLING DOUBLE TRAGEDY.

Two Well-known Residents Shot.

Alderman Geo. Willis and ex-Private Frank Carragher.

The usual quiet of Molong was broken at about 5.45 on Tuesday afternoon last by one of the most cowardly and cold-blooded crimes we have ever heard of. A crime which resulted in the death, almost on the spot, of Mr Frank Carragher, an old resident of Molong, and a returned soldier (familiarly known as "Private Murphy"), and Ald Willis, the popular and large-hearted proprietor of the Freemasons' Hotel. The occurrence, needless to say, caused a tremendous sensation in town, and profound sympathy is expressed for the relatives of the murdered men.

THE CRIME.

Briefly the facts are as follow: Early in the afternoon Mr Carragher, who was leaving in a day or two for Queensland, went to the

... who was leaving in a day or two for Queensland, went to the post office with his mother (a very old and highly respected resident of the town) for the purpose of making over his war gratuity to her. The business completed he left her near the Freemasons' Hotel and went in for a drink. In the bar of the hotel he met another returned soldier, a Russian Finn named Alfred Aksel Syrjalainen, and his mate Franz Wilhelm Salminen, who have been camped on the creek near the Rec for a week or so. An argument arose between Carragher and the Finn as to the merits of the respective units with which they had been connected during the late war. Exactly what transpired will never be known as unfortunately the two who heard and saw all are dead, but suddenly Mr Joseph Harris, who, with three others was playing cards in the bar parlor, heard Mr Carragher say, "If you do that again I'll knock you from here to Copper Hill." Then a shot was fired. Mr Harris jumped up, and saw the Finn, brandishing a revolver, backing towards the door leading into Watson Street. The Finn then fired again and made off. Mr Harris and Mr Willie ...

then fled again and made off. Mr Harris and Mr Willis pursued him and the latter caught him near the garage, when he shot him in the groin, and again made off. Mr Harris and Mr P. Griffin, pursued the man, the latter in a motor lorry. The murderer turned on Harris with his revolver, but fortunately it missed fire, and he tossed it into the creek (whence later it was recovered and found to contain two live cartridges.) In the meantime the lorry had gone on for the police. Messrs Harris and Griffin then rounded the man up and detained him till the police came, when they handed him over.

In the meantime a car had been procured to convey Frank Carragher to the hospital, but the unfortunate man collapsed and died before he could be put into it. Mr Willis, who, plainly to be seen, was very seriously wounded, was then placed in the car and taken to Dr Douglas' surgery, and later to the hospital. Mr Carragher's body was conveyed to the hospital morgue by Mr Price.

Dr Sir Neville Howse, of Orange, was summoned to operate on Mr Willis, and arrived about 8 o'clock, but on making an ex-

8 o'clock, but on making an examination of the patient, who was in an semi-unconscious condition, it was found that nothing could be done for him. The unfortunate man, at whose side his wife sat during the whole trying time, gradually sank and died at about 2.30 a.m., practically without regaining consciousness.

An attempt was made to take the wounded man's dying depositions, and the prisoner was taken to the hospital for identification, but it was of no avail. While the prisoner was waiting at the hospital he said, in his broken English, "I spent four years killing men, now I take no more notice of killing a man than killing a fly." This callous remark was made in the hearing of Mrs Willis.

During the night Mr Alcorn, the local postmaster, who is an old friend of Mr Willis and his family, did his utmost to establish connection with Wee Waa, and notify Mr Willis' father of the terrible occurrence, but without avail, and it was not until Wednesday afternoon that a telegram was received stating that the old gentleman had received the sad news, and was on his way to Molong per car—he arrived here

Molong per car—he arrived here yesterday morning in time for the funeral. Luckily for Mrs Willis, her cousin, Mr G. Flynn, of the Orange "Leader," having heard of the awful trouble, came over and took charge in the meantime.

THE PRISONER.

When arrested the prisoner, who gives his age as 27, appeared quite calm and absolutely unconcerned.

At the local Police Court, on Wednesday morning, before Mr Dnnn, J.P., the prisoner was charged with the murder of Frank Carragher and George Willis, on the 17th instant, and was remanded for seven days. His mate, who had been arrested on a charge of drunkenness, was, at the request of the police, remanded for 24 hours.

Accused is an expert shot with a

revolver, and during the days he has been camped near the creek he has often amused himself shooting birds on the wing with it.

He and his mate drove up from Sydney in quest of land on which to go rabbit trapping, but evidently they were not successful, as last Saturday they sold the tuppent

they were not successful, as last Saturday they sold the turnout.

An incident which tends to throw some light on the character of the accused, occurred earlier in the afternoon at the Telegraph Hotel, and in view of subsequent happenings might well have been taken as a warning to all and sundry. While at the hotel mentioned he pulled his money (some £17) out of his pocket and slapping it down on the counter, he, hand on hip-pocket, dared anyone to touch it.