

## TWO SONS KILLED.

### FATHER COMMITS SUICIDE.

#### Inquest on Sunshine Tragedy.

Horace Armstrong Breden killed one of his sons and seriously injured two others and his daughter at Sunshine early on the morning of March 2. Breden, whose age was 48 years, cut his own throat, and he died in hospital that evening. One of the injured sons died at the Children's Hospital on the following morning. At the morgue yesterday the city coroner (Mr. D. Grant) held an inquest on the death of the father and of the two sons—Maxwell, aged 11 years, and Alan, aged 13 years.

Francis Paulinus Barnard, aged 15 years, concrete-worker, of Derimut street, Sunshine said:—About 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon I went to the home of Mr. Breden at Lawson street, Sunshine, to see his son Jack. The back door was ajar, and I called for Jack. I heard him groaning and I heard someone breathing in the bathroom, and going inside I saw Jack lying on the floor of the front room. Outside the back door was a bloodstained axe. I immediately ran home and told my father.

Thomas Dibbs, sergeant of police, stationed at Oakleigh, and formerly stationed at Sunshine, said:—I went to the home of Horace Breden on March 2 and found the dead body of Maxwell Breden in the back bedroom. The other children—Alan, Marion, and Jack—who were alive, though unconscious, were lying on beds in the front and back bedrooms. The father was in the bathroom with his throat cut and was unconscious. There was a bloodstained axe outside the back door, and in the sink in the kitchen was a bloodstained razor. On the table in the kitchen the father had left a bank book, some money, and a note.

In the note the father stated that he thought he had gone completely mad and asked that he should not be judged too harshly. He had struggled to keep his children, working from a quarter past 5 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night for two years, but his health had broken down. He wished that the bodies should be cremated and put into the mother's grave; he had left sufficient money for this.

Frances Jane Schmidt, of Lawson street, Sunshine, said:—I live next to the house in which Horace Breden lived. About 2 o'clock on the morning of March 2 I woke and saw a light in one of the rooms next door. I heard two lots of blows, one muffled and the second distinct, and thought that someone was cutting wood. Again at 4 o'clock I woke and saw lights next door, but at 6 o'clock they were turned off.

Harold Dillon Breden, saddler, of The Right, Ivanhoe, said:—Horace Armstrong Breden was my brother. He had been looking after his children alone since his wife died two years ago. He had been a miner and was suffering from consumption.

Evidence was given by Dr. Charles Byrne, of Anderson street, Sunshine, that Breden was suffering from tuberculosis. Dr. Byrne had made arrangements for the children to go to the home of their father's

children to go to the home of their father's sister in Gippsland while their father was treated at a sanatorium.

The coroner found that the two children had been murdered by their father, who had committed suicide.

Jack Breden, aged 18 years, was discharged from the Melbourne Auxiliary Hospital at Caulfield yesterday morning. Marion Breden, aged seven years, is still in the Children's Hospital.