

**INQUISITION.**

VICTORIA }  
To Wit. }

AN INQUISITION for our Sovereign Lord King George V., taken at  
the Morgue, Melbourne, in the State of Victoria, the 24th  
day of August A.D. 1926 in the seventeenth  
year of the reign of our said Lord the King, by me, Daniel Berriman,  
gentleman, a Coroner of our Lord the King for the said State, upon the view  
of the body of Clement John DeGaris  
then and there lying dead.

Having inquired upon the part of our Lord the King, when, where, how,  
and by what means the said Clement John De Garis

(1) His or her.

came by<sup>1</sup> his death, I say that

on the 17th day of August 1926

at The Esplanade Mornington in the said

State the said Clement John De Garis

(2) Here state cause  
of death, if known;  
if unknown, doubt-  
ful, or no evidence,  
state the fact ac-  
cordingly.

died from<sup>2</sup>

*Suicide by coal gas*

*Passam*

INQUIRY

In witness whereof, I, the aforesaid Coroner, have to this Inquisition  
put my hand this 24th day of August  
A.D. 1926

*[Signature]*

Coroner

Victoria Police.---47

City Morgue

Station

Melbourne

Police District

August 17th 1926

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REPORT of

L.A. Baker Const 6031

Relative to

Death of C.J. De Garis at Mornington

Mr. D. Berriman

City Coroner

Constable Lacey of Mornington reports by Phone the death of C.J. De Garis of The Esplanade Mornington.

He was found by a Carrier who called at 12 noon to-day, and on going to the back door found a note intimating that the house would be full of gas, and that the body of De Garis would be found in the Kitchen.

The Police were called and the body of De Garis was found lying on a table which had been drawn up to the Gas Stove. His head was resting on the Gas Stove and the Gas had been turned on and he ~~was~~ was dead.

The body is being removed to the Royal Hotel Mornington.

There was a pile of letters, addressed to Mrs De Garis, lying on the table near the body.

L.A. Baker  
Const 6031

*Inquest  
M.S. 26  
Mr. Dixon Reader  
for Insurance Co.  
Mr. C. Catcher  
Mr. ... for  
Widow of deceased*

Dear Mr Scott

10/18/26

Key of front Door  
herewith.

Sorry to drag you into this: but you  
are a plumber & a plumber is needed.

There might be danger to anyone else.

The gas must be cut off outside  
the house.

The kitchen is closed & is full of gas  
& you'll find me there: but gas must be  
cut off & doors opened carefully before entering.

No matches must be used.

Better ring police. Also my wife

Hartman 2859.

Impire - she has no coin.

Fell down on a big job yesterday & paying  
the penalty today.

Please see parcels & letters under mat reach  
their destination.

G. Debaris

# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

VIOLET MAY DE GARIS

on her oath saith, I am a WIDOW

residing at HAWTHORN GLEN HAWTHORN

\*Christian and Surname in full.

Deceased was my Husband. On the 17th inst at Mornington identified the body of my husband. He was aged 41 years. I last saw him alive on the 17th inst at about 7 a.m. He said that he was going to Ringwood He was in good health then. He was in good spirits and cheerful. He did not appear to be worried or depressed. I have seen letters and slips of paper produced, said to have been written by him shortly before his death. I identify the writing and the signatures as that of deceased.

TO MR HEARDER

He had been attending to his business as usual for the past 3 or 4 weeks, as far as I know.

TO MR MC CUTCHEON

On the Monday night, the 16th inst, he was very depressed

TO THE CORONER

When he left on the 17th inst he asked me to have an early lunch ready for him as he was coming home. As he did not return I rang Ringwood and found that he had not been there. I then rang Mornington and I was told what had happened. I can not suggest any reason why he should take his own life. He said on the 16th inst that some Bank drafts had <sup>not</sup> come through, and that there was some delay. That was the only time he seemed depressed. He had ~~not~~ once before said that he would take his life. Apart from that he had not threatened to take his life. He had not at any time shown any mental change. He was always sane and normal.

*V. M. De Garis*

Taken and sworn before me the 24<sup>th</sup> day of August 1926 at Melbourne  
*[Signature]*  
Coroner.

# CORONER'S INQUEST.

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VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\* **WILLIAM THOMAS CAMERON**on his oath saith, I am a **MEDICAL PRACTITIONER**residing at **MORNINGTON**\*Christian and  
Surname in  
full.

On the 17th inst at about midday I went to "Dunoon"  
Esplanade Mornington the late residence of the deceased Clement John  
De Garis. I found the deceased lying in the Kitchen with his face  
over the top of the Gas stove His face was over a Gas jet. The house  
was full of Gas fumes. The body was still warm. The face was livid. The  
pupils were dilated and fixed. There was no sign of life. I tried artif-  
icial respiration for an hour, and I administered Oxygen, and I injected  
Cardiac and Respiratory stimulants.

TO MR HEARDER

I did not know Mr De Garis.

TO THE CORONER

He may have been dead about an hour. The cause of death  
was Coal Gas poisoning

*Jan I. Cameron*

Taken and sworn before me the

24<sup>th</sup>

day

of

August 1926 at Melbourne

*[Signature]*  
Coroner.

# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

JOHN HENRY SCOTT

on his oath saith, I am a PLUMBER

residing at WILSONS ROAD MORNINGTON

\*Christian and Surname in full.

On the 16th inst deceased came to my shop and he said that he wanted to make an appointment for me to come to his place at 12 noon on Tuesday as he wanted to see me about something very important. At 11 55 a.m. on the 17th inst I went to his residence. When I went to the front door I saw a note gummed onto the glass of the front door. The note produced is the note. I lifted up the mat and I saw a bundle of correspondence, also a letter addressed Mr Scott. "produced." There was a bundle of papers and parcels. I did not touch them. When I smelt the gas I opened the door and I went straight to the Kitchen door and opened it and I turned off the Gas at the Meter. When I got to the Kitchen I went straight in to see if the Gas was turned off at the Meter. I found the Kitchen full of gas and the blinds drawn. I heard the Gas whistling from the stove and I then turned the Gas Meter off. I pulled up the window blind. I then saw the deceased lying with his body on a table, close to the Gas stove. His head was on a red Tea-cosy which was on top of the Gas stove. His mouth and nose were close to the jet on the stove. That was one of the jets that the gas was escaping from. There were two jets turned on. I opened the back door and tried to get a current of air through the house. I went outside and I then went and rang the Police and the Doctor. I went to the front door and took the correspondence under the mat and put them on the dining room table. I then opened the letter addressed to me.

TO ME HEARDER

I saw Mr De Garis on the Wednesday before his death, I have seen him frequently during the last two months. He always seemed quite rational, and on the 16th inst he was rational.

TO THE CORONER

On the 16th he did not tell me what he wanted to see me about. He just said that it was very important.

Taken and sworn before me the 24<sup>th</sup> day

of August 1926 at Melbourne

*[Signature]*  
Coroner.

J. H. Scott.

# CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent\*

THOMAS RICHARD MASON

on his oath saith, I am a CONSTABLE

residing at MORNINGTON

\*Christian and Surname in full.

On the 17th inst. at 12 noon I went to the residence of deceased at the Esplanade Mornington/ From what I was told by Mr Scott I went to the Kitchen of the deceaseds home There, in the Kitchen, I saw the deceased. He had a table drawn to the edge of the Gas Stove and he was lying face downward on top of the table with his head resting on top of the Gas stove, immediately over the main boiling Gas jet. He was fully dressed and was apparently dead. Beside the body on the table was a Sun Pictorial dated the 17th inst. It was partly open and had strips torn from the edges of a couple of the leaves. Close to the body I found the strips of paper produced, on which was written the messages Mr Scott handed me another note, produced, and the envelope, There were several of the letters addressed to Mrs De Garis, and other people, which were written in deceaseds handwriting. I sent for the Dr Cameron and he tried to restore life without avail. The body was still warm when the Doctor came and apparently deceased had been dead only a little time. The room in which deceased was found is a room about 10 feet square with one window and door <sup>outside</sup> and one door leading into the dining room. The spaces under the door and vents in the room were blocked with rags. I removed the body of deceased to the Royal Hotel Mornington.

TO MR HEARDER

I spoke to Mr De Garis on the Saturday previous, He seemed quite normal. I have seen him at Mornington, and he always appeared quite normal. A Tea + cosy was under the side of his head on the gas stove

TO THE CORONER

I found nothing suspicious in the matter.

*T. R. Mason,*  
Const 6168

Taken and sworn before me the 24<sup>th</sup> day  
of August 1926 at Melbourne  
*[Signature]*  
Coroner.



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24<sup>th</sup> August

1926

PROCEEDINGS of INQUEST

held upon the body of

Clement John D<sup>o</sup> Lavis

at Melbourne Morgue

Received at the Crown Law Offices,

1926

26 AUG 1926

C. L. O.

*[Signature]*

11236

*[Signature]*

Coroner.

