

ARMED MAN IN TOWER.

SHOT GREETES CONSTABLE.

Long Vigil in Look-out.

HARVEY, July 29.—Apparently nursing a grievance which, it is believed, may have affected his reason, a bush worker at Mornington, armed with a rifle and ammunition, occupied a forestry look-out tower about six miles from the settlement and defied all efforts to bring him down until 9.30 o'clock tonight, when his 26-hour vigil ended.

Constable W. Aylmore, who was sent from Harvey, made an effort to climb the tower, hoping to coax the man down. He was greeted with the crack of a rifle but the shot did not take effect. The constable beat a retreat and, as further efforts to approach met with similar resistance, it was decided to wait under cover nearby in the hope that the man eventually would become pacified.

The man, George L. Elliott, who is of middle age and has six children, left his home last evening shortly after 7 o'clock, taking with him a single-barrelled shotgun and a quantity of ammunition. As he left the house, he handed his eldest son an envelope with instructions that it should be delivered to the postmaster at Mornington this morning. Elliott gave his family no explanation of his intentions.

"My Case."

The letter, which was this morning delivered to the postmaster by the boy in accordance with his father's instructions, contained five closely-written foolscap pages, headed "My Case," and concluding:—"I want a proper inquiry into my case and not by departmental officials. I want the whole system inquired into by the Chief Justice of Western Australia. I have taken possession of the forestry tower and I don't intend to come down till I get justice and, as my position gets more desperate, I intend to shoot to kill. I am well armed." In the document, Elliott sets out in great detail the treatment he alleges he has received from the Agricultural Bank and the Employment Department. He also makes allegations that the bank is indebted to him to the extent of £90.

On leaving his home, Elliott apparently made for the forestry tower, which is about a mile and a half from the house, and spent the night there. The tower is 110 feet high and is situated in a cleared area surrounded by thick forest. The cabin at the top is roofed. The tower is of skeleton construction, somewhat resembling poppet legs over a mine shaft. Access is gained to the top by a series of ladders running alongside

the shaft. Access is gained to the top by a series of ladders running alongside the sides of the tower.

Elliott was first discovered there by members of his family and, when all entreaties to urge him to return to his home failed, his wife communicated with the postmaster at Mornington with a request that the police should be notified. Constable Aylmore was immediately sent to Mornington, and arrangements were made for the transport of the man's wife and family into Harvey, where they arrived this evening. Arrangements have been made for them to be taken care of.

Mrs. Elliott told a story of privations suffered by the family owing to indigent circumstances. She told the police that for the past three days they had eaten nothing but dry bread.

Doctor's Attempt Fails.

This afternoon, Dr. A. N. Jacobs, of Harvey, who had previously attended members of the family, went with the police to the tower to attempt to induce Elliott to come down. He courageously climbed to the top of the tower to take food to the man. Elliott refused to open the trap door which would have given the doctor access to the cabin at the top of the tower, and he would not take the food and tea which was left on a landing near the cabin.

The doctor stated subsequently that the man was dangerous in his present frame of mind, and he considered that a continuous watch should be kept at the tower to apprehend the man should he forsake it.

Constable J. Chambers communicated with police headquarters and, acting on instructions from Perth, Constables Chambers, P. Potts, of Yarloop, and A. Napier, of Waroona, left for Mornington tonight at 8 o'clock in order to make, with Constable Aylmore, a further effort to induce the man to leave the tower.

Elliott was finally persuaded to leave his vantage point when the police promised him that his "case" would be investigated. Accompanied by some friends of Elliott the three constables reached the tower shortly before 9.30 o'clock. The police car was driven close to the base of the tower and one of Elliott's friends reasoned with him in an effort to get him down. At first Elliott refused to entertain any of the advice offered by his friend, but he finally agreed to throw his firearms and ammunition to the ground if the police would promise in return that his grievances would be investigated. The promise being given, he then threw the rifle and ammunition from the top of the tower before climbing down from his lofty perch which he had occupied for 26½ hours without having food or water.

The constables later brought him to Harvey, where he was given nourishing food and otherwise cared for. He will be charged in the police court tomorrow with being a person of unsound mind.

Elliott has resided in the district for some years, and has occupied several properties in the Mornington district in the capacity of caretaker.

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