

DORSET EVENING ECHO Friday, December 17, 1993

Dispute over boundary led to suicide

A DISPUTE over a garden boundary led retired heart surgeon Dr Mary Holt to kill herself, an inquest heard at Dorchester yesterday.

The 69-year-old surgeon was found in her garden shed at Parkway, Lower Sea Lane, Charmouth, after she had stabbed herself in the chest and wrists with a kitchen knife, swallowed pills and drank up to half a bottle of whisky.

A note found at the scene asked: "No resuscitation please".

It was addressed to her friend, ex-nurse Patricia Holliday, who shared the bungalow.

Mrs Holliday was out shopping at the time of the tragedy and Dr Holt was found by cleaner Mrs Kay Kibble who went to look for her when

she didn't return from pruning the roses. The shed was locked from the inside, and ambulancemen had to force the door open.

Mrs Holliday told the coroner Dr Holt had been distressed by a dispute with developers over her boundary, and upset when they took down the fence.

She was also depressed because of advancing arthritis and after an operation on her knees.

She talked about the fence and said the dispute made her feel suicidal, said Mrs Holliday.

"She suggested the two of us and the dog should get into the car with a hosepipe from the exhaust. I said no way was I going to do that," she told the coroner.

But on the day of her death she seemed better, and asked Mrs Holliday to get holiday brochures when she went shopping.

Ambulancemen said she was conscious when they arrived, but wouldn't help them with any information, and in the ambulance she tried to pull out the drip.

She died two hours later in Weymouth Hospital.

Said deputy West Dorset coroner Mr Alan Horne: "The note she left Mrs Holliday showed she clearly contemplated suicide. I am sure she intended to do it."

He recorded a verdict that she took her own life.