

Late Mr. John Durdin

PIONEER OF CUMMINS DISTRICT

GAVE LAND AND LAID FOUNDATION STONE OF CUMMINS INSTITUTE

Mr. John Durdin, who died at his home "Kia-Ora," Cummins, on March 24 was a pioneer of the district.

Born at Cape Jervis in 1853, he was the third son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Durdin. When he was 12 years old his parents moved to Kulpara, where they were among the first settlers of that district.

As a young man he farmed with an elder brother at Lochiel. In 1884 he married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Bidgood, of Lochiel, and they went to live at Melton, Yorke Peninsula, where they resided for 22 years. Mr. Durdin was a very active worker for the district. He was a member of the Kulpara Methodist Church, a Sunday School teacher and choirmaster for 22 years. He was also a member of the I.O. Rechabite Lodge and attained the honor of Past Chief Ruler. At the time of his death he had been a member for over 50 years.

In 1904 Mr. Durdin took up land on Eyre Peninsula, selecting section 2W, Hundred of Cummins. He, with two other pioneers of this district—the late Messrs. C. H. Atkinson and W. Farmilo—travelled round the gulf with their teams, taking approximately three weeks to do the journey.

The country was then all dense scrub. To ensure himself seed and horse feed for the first year, he cropped some land on property at Tumby Bay then held by Blacker Bros. Later Mrs. Durdin and family joined him. They were one of the first pioneering families to make their homes in this district. Their genuine hospitality has become proverbial.

When the track of the railway line was decided, Mr. Durdin had the first township blocks of Cummins surveyed. The whole of the township on the east side of the railway line today was

The whole of the township on the east side of the railway line today was originally his property. He gave the land on which the Cummins Institute is built and was given the privilege of laying the foundation stone of that building in 1936. He also gave a block of land for the building of a local hospital. Unfortunately, the advent of the war has postponed this building project.

Mr. Durdin was very fond of music and had a fine tenor voice. He was an active member of the Methodist choir for years. He was also an original trustee of the Cummins Methodist Church. A physical disability caused him to resign this office in 1928.

In his youth Mr. Durdin was a fine athlete. He retained his vigor until 1923, when a severe illness left him partly crippled. Apart from this disability he enjoyed good health and retained a robust mind.

The large attendance at the graveside and the atmosphere of deep respect throughout the burial service were eloquent testimony of the high esteem in which he was held.

Mr. Durdin left a family of five children. They are:—Mrs. A. J. A. Koch (Lameroo), Mr. J. H. I. Durdin (Prospect), Mr. J. R. Durdin (Yalunda Flat), Mrs. Albert Fuss and Miss F. E. Durdin, of Cummins.

There are 17 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.