

LATE MR. C. H. HOWARD

Mourners from all walks of life gathered at the graveside of the late Mr. Gympie Howard on Monday to pay their last tributes to one of the best known men in Western Queensland.

Politicians, stockmen, school teachers, business men and craziers listened to Rev. C. E. Torlach perform the last rites.

"It is a great honour," he said, "to do this last service for a man who was famous throughout the West as one of the old pioneers. His fine personal qualities endeared him to everyone who knew him and we are the poorer by his passing."

Charles Henry Howard was born 80 years ago. He took the name "Gympie" from the gold rush town where he was born and where he grew up. It remained with him all his life.

He came to Longreach in his early teens and worked as a shearer's cook in district sheds up until a few years of his death.

In 1898 he married Miss Mary Ann Jones, Longreach, who predeceased him four years ago.

During the early years of his life in Longreach he was active in the A.W.U. during the great industrial upheavals of the nineties and was one of the founders of the A.L.P.

The marriage was a very happy one and old-timers remember clearly how he used to walk as much as 20 miles after a shed cut out to be with his family at the week-end.

Of his 12 children, 11 are still living. A daughter, Prudence, died about four years ago.

Practically every one who lived

in Western Queensland knew or knew of the late Mr. Howard. His wit was famous and remarks he made 40 years ago are still quoted to-day when men talk of the sheds.

Those who remember him in his youth recall a tall, well-built handsome man with considerable talents as a grass fighter. Among many he was considered to be in the John L. Sullivan class, and had he wished it he might have had a brilliant career as a boxer.

But having come to the West and made his home here, he preferred to remain. He had a peculiar affinity with the outback. Its people were his people and he wished for no other life.

During the last years he became blind and retired with his family. It did not impair his ever-ready sense of humour and his cheerfulness was an inspiration to those who knew him.

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After spending several months in hospital he returned to his home recently, where he passed away on Monday. Old friends who had returned for the Back to Longreach Week joined with his family at the bedside to bid him farewell.

He is mourned by six sons, five daughters, 17 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

His surviving children are Charles (Mervborough), Robert (Kilanga, Rockhampton), Albert (Goulburn), Hulton (Longreach), Gary (Merchant Navy), Wallace (Longreach), Dorothy (Mrs. H. Meares, Dalby), Edith (Mrs. S. Conrad, Rockhampton), Ivy (Mrs. R. Darvall, Bairnsdale, Vic.), Joyce (Mrs. E. Miller, Mulgrave, Barraldine), and Marjorie (Mrs. J. Tanka, Longreach).