

PASSED ON

GRAND DUBBO GENTLEMAN

DEATH OF GEORGE W. BELL

In the early hours of yesterday morning, in the hospital he loved so well and for which he had done so much, George Walter Bell, one of Dubbo's finest citizens and nature's gentleman in every sense of the word, passed the Great Divide.

It is a long time since a death has stirred the hearts of every section of the community, but when the news quickly flew round the town, the expressions of sorrow and regret heard in all quarters were sincere and heartfelt, an eloquent testimony to the genial "G.W.", whose popularity was a by-word in Dubbo.

It is a far call from our town on the banks of the Macquarie to Dunedin, capital of Otago, in the South Island of New Zealand, yet it was in that city that the late Mr. Bell first saw the light of day 64 years ago. When quite a young man, he crossed the seas to Australia, first coming to Dubbo in 1866, when the town was only a shadow of the thriving inland city it is to-day. For some time he was overseer of Davies' sawmill, which was situated near the Snow Grounds, but later he was associated in the Eumungerie district with Mr. Loxton, a surveyor for whom he worked for some time. Some years later he went to Narromine, where he was connected with Donald McPhee's sawmills, and married in 1892.

It was during his stay in Narromine that he first entered the hotel business, being a successful and universally liked boniface in that town for very many years. He was associated with every public and sporting body in the community and when he left Narromine on July 15, 1912, to come to Dubbo, his loss to the town was keenly felt.

It was at Dubbo that the deceased stamped his name indelibly on the history of the town, for since he took over the Court House Hotel 18 years ago, he has left no stone unturned to advance the Hub of the West, publicly and in every sphere of sport.

A clean sport, he was an active member of the Dubbo Racing Club for many years, filling the presidential office on several occasions. His efforts did much to advance the prestige of the club, and every sporting fan in the West was familiar with the genial gentleman, who, from the judge's box on the Dubbo racecourse, scanned the colours as they flashed round the track. The late Mr. Bell was also a keen

colours as they flashed round the track. The late Mr. Bell was also a keen bowler, and besides being president of the local club several times, was an active playing member.

For nine years he was president of the Dubbo District Cricket Association, and during his term of office did much to advance the game in this district. He was a member of the Dubbo Mechanics' Institute, and was responsible for much good work during his association with that institution.

Outstanding in the life of the deceased was his work in connection with the Dubbo District Hospital, his efforts being noteworthy for their sincerity and good results. His Association with the institution on the hill is well known to everyone, but it will not be out of place to mention that when he decided to relinquish his position on the various public bodies a little over a year ago, he decided to remain as head of the committee of the hospital, which was dear to his heart.

The late Mr. Bell has been intimately connected with the hospital for 10 years, the last four being in the president's chair. When the new Hospitals Commission came into force, and the committee was changed to a Board of Directors, the deceased was unanimously elected chairman. No one filled the office better than he, for his association with the hospital has been characterised with fine and charitable work. It was only lately, when the new Samuels wing was opened, that he further assisted the hospital by donating a sum of money for a private ward in the new block. That private ward will be known as the "Bell Ward" for all time.

As an alderman on the Municipal Council, he was as honest in his endeavours for the welfare of the citizens as he was with every other body with which he was connected. Unassuming, cheerful and with a smile and encouraging word for everyone, it is no wonder that his death has caused many a tear in the community, where the gap caused by his passing will be hard to fill.

Mourning the death of a loving and faithful husband and father are his widow, two sons—Walter and Harry—and two daughters—Mrs. Bert Palmer (Macquarie-street) and Miss Marion Bell. To all of these is extended the sincere sympathy of the whole town and district.