

## The Late James Ephraim Wolfe.

We announce with regret the death on Thursday night at his residence, Springfield, St. Andrew-street, West Maitland, of Mr. James Ephraim Wolfe, senior member of the firm of Wolfe, Gorrick and Company, and a member of the firm of Brunker and Wolfe. The sad event was not entirely unlooked for, for Mr. Wolfe had been in poor health for years. Nevertheless, the death was sudden, and due to collapse of the enfeebled system of the sufferer. In the year 1885 Mr. Wolfe was attacked with paralysis, and in May 1886, he paid a visit to Europe in the hope of benefit from change of air. The voyage had indeed some effect in strengthening the patient, yet he never regained after his return his old health, and latterly it has given his relatives and friends no small anxiety. About three months since Mr. Wolfe consulted a Sydney physician who confirmed what he had heard from his Maitland advisers—that the symptoms were so unfavourable that there was no hope of averting a fatal termination. Mr. Wolfe accepted the fiat with resignation, and in calmness and patience awaited his end, exhibiting much kindness and consideration for others. His mind was clear throughout, and at half-past nine o'clock on Thursday evening, surrounded by his loving family, he peacefully breathed his last. Out of respect for the family, whose connection with St. Mary's Church has been life-long, the chimes told out with a muffled peal the sad news of Mr. Wolfe's demise.

Mr. Wolfe was born in Sydney on September 30, 1830, and was therefore nearly sixty-three years of age at the time of his death. In the year 1840 he was employed as a boy in the establishment which afterwards became his own, and eventually he became manager. The firm of Wolfe and Gorrick was founded in the year 1855, and has conducted its business in the original premises enlarged now to more than three times their original dimensions, while the firm itself has also been augmented in numbers. For many years Mr. Wolfe has also been associated with Mr. J. N. Brunker in the stock and station agency business. He ranked among the oldest magistrates of Maitland, and during Mr. E. D. Day's police magistracy always acted as chairman of the bench and was regarded by Mr. Day as his right hand man. He was the first captain of the West Maitland Volunteer Rifle Company and retired on his rank. In discharging the duties of this office Mr. Wolfe spared neither pains nor expense to make the company successful in every way. And it is in the recollection of most of the older townfolk how, in recognition of their captain's generosity and enterprise, the old Volunteer Band used yearly to serenade him at Springfield. For many years prior to the date of the visit to England referred to above, Mr. Wolfe was Returning Officer for West Maitland. He was also a director of the Hunter River New Steam Navigation Company, and for a long time chairman of the Board. Likewise he was a Mason of long standing, and held the highest or Royal Arch degree.

As a man of business, Mr. Wolfe was noted for shrewdness, activity, and energy; and for genial good heartedness was highly esteemed as a man. In all aspects he was a good citizen, and the regard in which he was held was very conspicuously shown on the occasion of his visit to England in 1886. A large and representative meeting of townfolk was

held under the presidency of Mr. Robert Hynde, then Mayor and since deceased,—“to consider how best to show appreciation of Mr. Wolfe as a townsman.” The propriety of a banquet was discussed, but as Mr. Wolfe's health forbade his being subjected to any excitement, the meeting resolved to make a present which should serve as a heirloom. The sum of £82 was subscribed in the room; there was no solicitation of contributions; yet the fund came to be of such generous proportions that the gift included a handsome gold chronograph with gold albert, and a fine Early English chimes clock. Presents were also given on the occasion by the employes of Wolfe, Gorrick and Co., and of Brunker and Wolfe, and the speeches both at the meeting and the presentation were profuse in sympathy with Mr. Wolfe in his affliction and in recognition of his worth as a townsman and mercantile man.

The late Mr. Wolfe married a daughter of a venerable Maitlander, Mr. Isaac Gorrick, and leaves a widow and large grown-up family. He was so widely and favourably known that though he had long been withdrawn by illness from active participation in work of any kind, his death will be generally deplored and sympathy with the bereaved family will have an extended range. Ample evidence of that sympathy was in fact given in the course of yesterday. Hundreds of telegrams were received by the family, expressing deep regret and speaking hearty words of comfort, and many of the senders promised to attend the funeral which takes place at three o'clock to-day. The three Railway Commissioners, warm personal friends of the late Mr. Wolfe, will also be present at the funeral, and the Mayor, Mr. E. A. Young, has placed his carriage at their disposal.