

## Charles James Robinson

**Rushworth Chronicle**

**23 October, 1931**

ROBINSON.—On the 19th October, at Phillips street, Rushworth, Charles James, dearly beloved husband of Ellen (Nellie), son of the late Dr. Robinson, of Heathcote and brother of George (deceased), Walter (deceased), Annie, Henry, Tom (deceased) and William, aged 89 years. A colonist of 78 years. Sadly missed.

### **DEATH OF MR C. J. ROBINSON**

#### **A PIONEER PASSES**

#### **FOUNDER OF THE "CHRONICLE"**

The death of Mr. Charles James Robinson, which occurred on 19th October [1931], at his residence, Phillips street, Rushworth, closes a long career, almost wholly spent in Rushworth and surrounding district.

Up till about a fortnight ago Mr. Robinson was in his usual state of good health, when he was laid up with an attack of bronchitis, followed by tonsillitis, which his advanced age did not give him the vitality to combat and he passed peacefully away.

Mr. Robinson, who was in his 90th year, was born at Harleston, a suburb of London, England, whence at the age of 11 years, he sailed in 1853, with his parents and other members of his family by the "Barrackpore" for Australia. The voyage of those days in sailing ships of a few hundred tons burthen offers a wonderful contrast to the palatial liners of today. The landing at Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) had to be accomplished in small boats, an experience in itself after months at sea. His father, Dr. Robinson, went to Bendigo on his arrival in Victoria and afterwards established himself on the McIvor diggings (now Heathcote), where he practised for many years.

The late Mr. Robinson was a pupil at Scotch College, Melbourne, which in his time was known as "The Academy," founded by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in 1851, the principal being Mr Robert Lawson. At his death Mr. Robinson was one of the very few survivors of those traditionally known at the College as "Lawsonites," and his name is on the special record there with others of his school days.

Some idea is conveyed of the development of our State and Commonwealth during Mr. Robinson's lifetime from the fact that the aborigines camped in close proximity to the college.

Mr. Robinson finished his education at the Church of England Grammar School, Melbourne, and after leaving school chose to follow journalism. It is of particular interest that in 1869 he founded the "Waranga Chronicle" and "Goulburn Advertiser", the forerunners of the "Rushworth Chronicle" and "Murchison Advertiser."

Prior to coming to Rushworth he established a paper at Graytown, which he conducted for about a year. The early fever of the gold era had subsided and reefing had largely taken the place of alluvial rushes.

The period however was still an exciting one, but stable conditions were evolving from the fevered condition of early influx of diggers, and coincident with the appearance of the "Chronicle" the Crown Lands were thrown open for selection. At this time the whole of the surroundings of Rushworth were virgin bush, and it is an arresting thought to reflect on the transformation that took place during Mr Robinson's business career. With the opening up of the countryside the "Chronicle" had a very wide area of circulation, and established itself in popular favour.

Mr Robinson's career as a journalist was marked by constant probity, and at the time of his retirement from journalism he was held in high esteem, which has continued until his death.

After retiring in 1903 from the press Mr. Robinson gave himself exclusively to his farm, "Moora Vale," but with the advance of years handed the practical management of it to a nephew (Mr. C. W. Robinson) and spent the remainder of his life in residence at Phillips street.

Deceased for many years held the Commission of the Peace, but becoming afflicted with deafness he confined his duties to administrative acts. In all things comprising the amenities of country life he leant a willing hand, but recognised that a pressman's activity lay with the pen rather than the hurly burly of the public arena.

In his youth Mr. Robinson was a keen sportsman with rod and gun and also found pleasure in the kangaroo hunts so much favoured in the early days. He was also of prominence in cricket and a familiar figure on the field with the stalwarts of his day. He was one of the foundation members of the Rushworth Bowling Club, with which he retained his membership until shortly before his death, although he ceased as a playing member during the last few years. He was also a trustee of the Rushworth Mechanics' Institute. He was also one of the oldest members of the Jubilee (Rushworth) Masonic Lodge.

He was of athletic build and retained this characteristic to the end of his life. In private life he was universally respected. It is regrettable that his store of reminiscences of the pioneering days has not been brought into book form, for his life and the growth of the district have run side by side, but record offers through the files of the "Chronicle" for this to anyone of a literary turn. His knowledge of the old days was very helpful in connection with the "Back to Rushworth" celebrations at Easter, in 1928, and eagerly availed of in the souvenir publication.

Deceased leaves a widow, daughter of a pioneer of our district, the late Mr. J. Brideson. A sister (Mrs Morgan, of Bath, England) and two brothers, Messrs Henry and William Robinson (Melbourne) also survive him. The funeral took place on Wednesday, the remains being interred in the Rushworth cemetery, and was largely attended, members of the Masonic Lodge following the hearse. The burial service of the Church of England was conducted by the Rev. W. H. Williams and the masonic burial service was read by the Wor. Bro. P. H. Peart (Chaplain). There were many floral tributes.

**Rushworth Chronicle**

**30 October, 1931**

BEREAVEMENT CARD

Mrs C. J. Robinson desires to express sincere thanks for all telegrams, letters, cards, floral tributes and personal expressions of sympathy extended to her in her recent sad bereavement. Will all please accept this as a personal expression of her deepest gratitude.