

Mr W. C. Walbran

Rushworth Chronicle

22 July, 1892

DEATH OF MR W. C. WALBRAN

The news of the death of Mr W. C. Walbran, of Rushworth, which took place at an early hour on Sunday morning last will be received with unfeigned regret throughout the whole of the district.

The deceased gentleman had been so closely identified with the fortunes of Rushworth that his demise, though he had reached the age of 65 years, will leave a gap which it will be difficult to fill. Unostentatious though he was, he nevertheless contrived to do a vast deal of good for the town, particularly in earlier years, failing health latterly compelling him to retire from active life.

His hand was ever ready to help the needy, and though it was not blazoned through the streets, many a poor person has had timely assistance from W. C. Walbran.

He was a member of the old Road Board for some years, and a founder of the Rushworth Mechanics' Institute, the secretaryship of which he held for about 20 years—in fact, he only severed his connection with the institution early last year prior to taking a trip to the old country.

He was an enthusiastic mining speculator, and gave a deal of support to the mining industry all along. Mr Walbran was born in London in 1827, and spent his earlier years in his father's warehouse. In 1849, however, the wondrous reports of the finds of gold in the New Eldorado caused a great sensation throughout the Old World, and he went over to the great mining country.

He met with but moderate success, and like many others, attracted by the spreading fame of Victoria, he came to this colony in 1852, visiting in succession the Bendigo, Heathcote, Whroo, and Buckland diggings. Having secured a fair competency he in 1800 paid a visit to his home, but did not stay long, returning to the colony in the beginning of 1801. In partnership with Mr Routledge, of Heathcote, he in the same year opened business in Rushworth.

In 1868 a branch business was opened in Graytown under the management of Mr Growse. Mr Routledge (who is still alive in England) retired from the business eventually, and Mr Walbran took in with him Mr Lamb (who also is still in the land of the living at Brighton.) For a number of years the business has been in his own name, but latterly, owing to the failing health of the proprietor, it has been managed by his son, Mr James Walbran.

In May last year, feeling a desire to once more visit his old home, and also to see his sister, his then only remaining relative, he started on a trip to England, but received a great shock on his arrival in London, his sister having died while he was on the voyage. Mr Walbran never really recovered this shock, and after his return in November he was never the same man.

The deceased was appointed to the Commission of the Peace some 10 years since, and his decisions were always most impartial.

Married in 1861, Mr Walbran leaves a widow, two sons, and three daughters.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, when the respect in which the deceased gentleman was held was shown by the very large number of friends, not only from Rushworth, but also from the surrounding districts, who followed the remains to the grave, some 400 being present.

The burial service was read by the Rev. J. Swindells, and the mortuary arrangements were carried out by Messrs Coy & Anderson.

Rushworth Chronicle

29 July, 1892

We inadvertently omitted to mention in our last issue, in referring to the funeral obsequies of the late Mr W. C. Walbran, that the Rushworth Brass Band played the Dead March from the residence of the deceased to the cemetery gates.

This was a graceful tribute of respect to one of the founders of the Band.