

Death of Mr Andrew Dempster

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On Saturday morning early there passed away another of the old band of pioneers in the person of Mr. Andrew Dempster, of Muresk, at the age of 66. His health had been failing for many months, and heart failure finally supervened. The deceased gentleman was attended by Dr. Rockett, of Northam. His end was peaceful, and he breathed his last surrounded by the various members of his family, who had been summoned to his bedside.

The late Mr. Dempster was the third son of Captain J. M. Dempster, of Bucklands, near Northam, where he was born on February 21, 1843. At an early age he evinced a decided talent for exploration, and led several expeditions into the then little known eastern and south-eastern portions of the State. Accompanied by his brother, the late Mr. C. E. Dempster, and Messrs. C. Harper and B. Clarkson, he traversed Southern Cross, and passed near what is now known as Coolgardie. On another occasion he explored the southern coast as far as Point Culver, on the Bight. He was also the first white man to visit and correctly place on the map the Dundas Range. As a result of these expeditions Mr. A. Dempster, in conjunction with his three brothers, Mr. J. P. Dempster and the late Messrs. C. E. and W. S. Dempster, in 1864, started the Esperance sheep and cattle station. Later, in 1872, the Fraser Range station was added. Mr. Dempster resided on the stations for nearly a quarter of a century, and was managing director for the firm for forty-four years, during which period, owing to his able and careful administration, these properties thrived exceedingly. In the eighties Mr. Dempster added to his station holdings the Mibbian cattle station on the Gascoyne river, in conjunction with Sir Edward Wittenoom, and later, in 1893 acquired the Billabalong sheep and cattle station, which he subsequently enlarged to over three-quarters of a

million acres. In 1890 Mr. Dempster left Esperance to develop his Muresk estate, upon which he resided up to the time of his death. Upwards of 2,000 acres were cleared, while numerous costly improvements, fencing, buildings, etc., were effected.

The deceased gentleman married in 1867 Miss M. E. Marsden, a cousin of Bishop Samuel Marsden, late of Bathurst, New South Wales, by whom he leaves eight living children, and who predeceased him by 20 years. Later, in 1891, he married the widow of the late Mr. Fred. Roe, who survives him. For 20 years Mr. Dempster was a member of the honorary magistracy for the whole State, and during 1903-4 represented the Eastern Province as a member of the Legislative Council.

The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon and was very largely attended. The remains of the deceased, which were enclosed in a massive polished jarrah coffin with silver fittings, were interred in the old portion of the Church of England cemetery alongside the grave of the late Captain J. M. Dempster, the father of the deceased. The Rev. R. H. Moore officiated at the graveside, and the pallbearers were Messrs. W. D. Cowan, John Taylor, Wm. Morgan, T. H. Wikling, M.L.C., Newton Burges, and C. B. Cox, solicitor of Perth. There were numerous wreaths and the funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. H. and H. Withnell.