

OBITUARY.

MR. STEPHEN PARKER, SENR.

Mr. Stephen Parker, whose death took place on the 18th inst. at his residence, Northbourne, in the York district, was one of the earliest settlers, and by his death one more of the few remaining links from the chain of old colonists is severed. To those early pioneers the colony is greatly indebted, and their offspring must look back with pride and hold them in pleasant memory as the courageous founders of a new country. Combating the numerous difficulties of the early days, and achieving in the end a conquest, we can indeed appreciate the indomitable spirit which characterised their efforts and carried them triumphantly through all their toils and hardships—hardships to which many of the settlers of the present day are strangers.

In the mother country, Mr. Parker's pursuit was that of a farmer and grazier, but, like many other gentlemen in that line of business, he felt the disastrous effects which the final closing of the war, in 1815, had upon farmers generally; and, seeing no hope of a change to the grazier's advantage, Mr. Parker turned his attention abroad. The discovery of the Swan River by Captain Stirling, and the proposals and terms of settlement projected in 1828, having been circulated, Mr. Parker, in 1829, determined upon sailing for the then inhospitable shores of Western Australia, and if practicable to make it the land of his adoption. Arriving here in February, 1830, in the ship Hooghly, with his wife and family of six children, Mr. Parker's first business was to select grants of land, in conformity with the provisions under which the early settlers came to this colony. At that time, sections were granted according to the value of property introduced, and for every item of live and dead stock of the value of eighteen pence an acre of land was given. Accordingly, Mr. Parker, in connection with several other gentlemen with this view, explored the country and made choice of blocks of land in different parts of the colony, and finally settled in the York district, making, as nearly all the settlers did in those days, his own place of residence, where, at the time of his death, he had resided for more than 40 years.

Mr. Parker belonged to a very old stock, being a member of the ancient family of Wyborn, in the county of Kent, whose escutcheon is a boar's head and three swans. The late Mrs. Parker was a Miss Wyborn, and also of the same family, Mr. Parker having married his cousin. Northbourne Abbey formerly belonged to the Wyborn family, having been presented to a member of the family by one of the Kings of Kent. But, through

by one of the Kings of Kent. But, through the carelessness of one of the Wyborn's, it passed out of their hands.

Mr. Parker lived to a ripe age, having exceeded by a few months his 83rd year. He leaves a numerous progeny to mourn his death. In their midst he was beloved as a kind and gentle father and grandfather. He was an affectionate and tender-hearted husband, and a peacable friend to all his neighbours. Indeed, the deceased gentleman seemed happily to possess that rare blessing of charity so strikingly portrayed by St. Paul, and therefore lived in peace with all men.

The funeral took place at 4 o'clock p.m., on the 19th inst., and the very numerous and respectable attendance was a testimony to the great respect and esteem in which the deceased was held by all the settlers in the York and Beverley districts. The remains were interred in St. Peter's Churchyard, Bevelry, by the side of his late consort Susanna, who died in 1860.