

# Death of William Beebe senior

Monday, September 28, 1891

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On Saturday afternoon about 2.30 o'clock Mr. Wm. Beebe, senior, the well-known stone and monumental mason of Mitchell street, Bendigo, breathed his last at his residence on the Marong road. He had been ailing for some time from a bronchial affection and latterly was unable to lie down or sleep, but up to the last moment he retained his faculties and was very precise in giving instructions regarding his funeral and interment. He died very peaceably.

Deceased was a native of Rutlandshire, England. He had several brothers, one of whom was killed in the Crimean war; another was killed at Charing Cross, Bendigo, by a lorry running over him, and a third is a stationmaster with the railway company with which Mr. Speight was associated in England. Some 37 years ago deceased immigrated to Victoria, and after a voyage of 100 days was landed at Port Fairy. He proceeded inland to Dunkell, where he remained for some time.

From there he shifted to Melbourne, but after a brief stay went on to Bendigo, and pitched his tent where the old pound stands on the McIvor Road. The life of a gold digger had no attractions for him; and he at once commenced work at his trade — that of a stone mason on the site of the present Bank of Australasia. This was some thirty five years ago.

Having a strong liking for a country life he took up a selection on the Marong road opposite the Duke of Edinburgh Hotel, and, with the able assistance of his wife, followed the dairying business for about eight years. Then leaving her to superintend the farm he devoted himself to contracting, in Eaglehawk chiefly for a few years until he removed to Bendigo, and started the stone and monumental business in Mitchell street, a business which, with the assistance of Mr Wm. Beebe, jun., has steadily progressed, and now occupies a very prominent position in Victoria. He was a man of great persistence of character, and a hard worker.

After his day's labors in the stone yard he would labor on his farm with untiring energy, building dams, barns, stables and planting an orchard, and of late years he commenced the erection of a fine stone mansion, which has just been finished, the stone being obtained, except the granite facings, from an adjacent ridge of rocks. A large portion of all this work was executed by himself, through working late into the night, and there is not the slightest doubt, but the bodily strain told on him as he grew in years.

Deceased took a great interest in political and social movements, and had very pronounced opinions. He was associated with Messrs Don, Lumsden and Galloway in Melbourne in the early fifties in opposing the sale of public lands; and on Bendigo he has always been a warm upholder of the principle of leasing the lands, and only quite recently he issued a pamphlet on the nationalisation of land.

He was the first to quarry stone from the Grampians, and he convened the first meeting on Bendigo in connection with the masons' trade to establish the eight hours' system, and the masons were the first trade in the colony to adopt the system. Deceased, who was 64 years of age, leaves a wife and four sons and three daughters, grown up, to mourn their loss. He will be interred in the Back Creek Cemetery, and the funeral takes place this forenoon.