

PIONEER OF INDUSTRY

THE LATE MR. W. ORDISH.

The death of Mr. W. P. Ordish, late of Davey street, Frankston, which occurred suddenly a fortnight ago, marked the passing of one who could lay just claim to the rank of one of Victoria's pioneers of industry. When quite a young man the late Mr. Ordish, who lived at Dandenong, set out one day with a barrow and a shovel to prospect for clay. In what was then a large open paddock on Stud road he found that for which he sought, and the digging of that first barrowload of clay laid the foundation stone of what was destined to become a flourishing business. Success did not, however, come overnight. Mr. Ordish, satisfied with his first tests, put in a small puddling machine and made his first batch of bricks. With samples of these the pioneer tramped throughout Melbourne and its suburbs soliciting orders, and went over almost the whole of the metropolitan area before he wrote his first order. Having made his first sale, he had accomplished the second step and eventually placed his goods on a sound footing on the market. The plant was increased and more hands were employed as the Ordish fire

were employed as the Ordish fire bricks became better known. Then came his big step forward. He secured a contract for the supply of fire bricks to the Victorian Railways, and from that time until the present day all the locomotives built in the State have had their fire-boxes constructed with Ordish fire bricks. The business continued to flourish and became the best known fire-brick manufactory in Victoria. Today it is one of the leading industries of Dandenong, and no traveller along Stud road has passed without being impressed by the great line of kilns which have grown upon that spot where a young man delved for his first barrowload of clay.

About eight years ago Mr. Ordish disposed of the business for a very satisfactory sum. His health had commenced to fail, and after his retirement became worse. About five years ago he left Dandenong and went to Hastings, and shortly afterwards settled in Frankston. He became fond of this seaside town and was content to spend his remaining years here.

The end of his busy life came when he was still by no means an old man—he was 64—but he had built for himself in his lifetime a monument more fitting than polished marble—the Ordish Firebrick Company still flourishes and pays tribute to its founder.