

LONG SERVICE TO CHURCH AND PUBLIC DEATH OF MR. H. E. FOOKES

After long years of service in Taranaki as a lay reader in the Anglican Church and as a public service and local body official, Mr. Harry Egmont Fookes died in the New Plymouth hospital yesterday at the age of 79 years. He had been ill for a comparatively short time.

Mr. Fookes was widely known throughout New Zealand. He had been a lay reader in St. Mary's Parish, New Plymouth, for nearly 50 years and was also a diocesan lay reader. He was for many years a member of the vestry of St. Mary's Church, and at the time of his death he was a member of the parish board of nominations which has to do with matters when there is a vacancy in the cure of the parish. From 1885 to 1922 he was an officer of the Telegraph Department and from that date until 1945 he was a clerk in the inspector's department of the New Plymouth Borough Council.

He was the oldest son of Mr. A. C. Fookes, the second mayor of New Plymouth who held that office from December, 1878, to December, 1879. His father arrived from Britain in the ship Black Eagle in 1861 and was awarded the New Zealand War Medal for his services with the Taranaki Military Settlers in the Maori War campaigns from 1864 to 1868. After the war he opened a store at Waverley, but in 1876 moved to New Plymouth and established himself as a land broker.

Mr. H. E. Fookes was born at Waverley towards the end of the Maori Wars and his first years were coloured by the alarms of that period and its simmering aftermath among Maoris of the district showing resentment. Mr. Fookes could recall many incidents in which the chief characters were friendly or none too friendly Maoris. At one stage his mother had to take her family to New Plymouth for safety.

Mr. Fookes was educated at the New Plymouth High School and Nelson College. In 1885 he entered the Post and Telegraph Department as a cadet in the telegraph branch, being posted to Wellington. When he retired in 1922 he had been supervisor of telegraphs at New Plymouth for many years. Not long afterwards he joined the borough inspectors' office as a clerk, from which he retired in 1945.

A strong interest in music was translated in consistent support of the New Plymouth Choral Society of which he was a member from its inception. Another interest for Mr. Fookes was bowling. He was twice singles champion of the New Plymouth club, of which he was the oldest member after Mr. A. K. Smart. He joined the club in 1905 and in more recent times was secretary for several years.

Mr. Fookes married Miss Nell Rochfort, Nelson, who died several years ago. He is survived by a family of four—Mr. N. C. Fookes, Hamilton, Mr. G. R. Fookes, Wellington, Mrs. F. Read, Wanganui, and Mrs. Nisbet Smith, Invercargill. Dr. E. F. Fookes, New Plymouth, is a brother.

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