

DEATH OF ALD. COOMBES.

The death of Ald. Albert John COOMBES, which occurred early on Monday morning, has created a gap in the public life of the town of Ryde which will not easily be filled. The late Alderman figured prominently in the civic work of the borough for a long number of years, and his genial personality endeared him to all with whom he came into contact. Both in public and in private life Ald. COOMBES was a typical "good citizen," and he numbered among his friends not only those with whom he was associated in civil life, but many with whom he came into contact in his business. In early life Ald. COOMBES was connected with the firm of MARVIN and Sons, auctioneers of Union-street, and about 35 years ago he started, with his brother, the well-known business of Messrs. A. J and W. COOMBES, in Monkton-street. Subsequently premises were taken in Cross-street, where for some 27 years the business has been carried on. Ald. COOMBES had been in failing health for a considerable time and had had to retire from all public work. He had been a member of the Town Council since 1885, and was elected to the important position of Mayor and chief magistrate in 1906. The duties of this office were carried out with urbanity and success, but even at that period Ald. COOMBES's health gave his friends cause for much anxiety. The late Alderman was a prominent member of the congregation of Holy Trinity Church, and served for a number of years as churchwarden and sidesman.

THE FUNERAL

- took place on Thursday, when the first part of the service was held at Holy Trinity Church. Here the Vicar (the Rev. J. E. EDDIS) officiated, assisted by the Rev. C. E. HUGHES. The service was fully choral, Mr. A. Percy JAMES being at the organ. The hymns were "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and "Peace, perfect peace." As the funeral cortege left the church the organist played "O rest in the Lord." The Mayor and Corporation attended in their official capacity, headed by the mace-bearer (Mr. E. SOTHCOTT), the mace being draped with crape. The members of the Corporation present (who were fully robed) included the Mayor (Mr. Michael MAYBRICK, J.P.), Aldermen E. GROVES, J.P., S. FOWLER, J.P., A. G. MILLWARD, J.P., C. C. H. SWEETMAN, J.P., and G. E. MEARS, Councillors E. G. STROUD, G. A. BLACKALL, J.P., J. I. BARTON, C. J. DE LAUNAY, A. S. MARLOW, A. TEAGUE, L. J. SOUTER, J. Benham PURNELL, G. GARRETT, C. LANGDON, G. CRABB, and J. HANSFORD, the Town Clerk (Mr. C. G. VINCENT), the Deputy Town Clerk (Mr. C. H. COLLIS), the Chief Constable (Mr. C. GREENSTREET), the Waterworks Manager (Mr. J. T. HARVEY), the Captain of the Fire Brigade (Mr. S. C. SAPSWORTH), Mr. J. F. LOADER, Mr. F. W. MUNT, Mr. A. WHEELER, Mr. E. WHITE, and Mr. F. W. RANDS. Among those also present were Capt. R. M. ALEXANDER, J.P., Mr. W. Hammond RIDDETT, J.P., Mr. P. THELUSSON, J.P., Major C. SWEETMAN, C.C., Dr. K. W. Ingleby MACKENZIE, Major J. ELLERY, Messrs. R. COLENUTT, T. G. HERRING, H. P. CHIVERTON, A. HACKSHAW, H. WAITE, P. T. CHIVERTON, F. S. WATT, W. H. LONG, H. DURRANT, F. FARRAND, J. PRIOR, J. FARDELL, G. GODFREY, A. DRAKE, T. DIMMER, R. CURTISS, C. LOADER, J. HOWELL, J. E. BREBNER, H. J. OSBORNE, J. G. DUFFETT, H. PEARCE, H. H. PERKINS, R. FRY, and HAPGOOD.

At the Cemetery the committal sentences were pronounced by the Vicar of Holy Trinity. The grave was lined with flowers and evergreens. The coffin was of polished oak, with brass fittings, and bore the inscription: " Albert John COOMBES, born July 13th, 1846, died September 20th, 1909." The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. HANSFORD Bros. The mourners were Mr. Walter COOMBES (brother) and Mrs. COOMBES, Mr. A. E. COOMBES (brother), Mr. and Mrs. Percy V. COOMBES (nephew and niece), Mr. and Mrs. Harold COOMBES (son and daughter-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. John B. COOMBES (son and daughter-in-law), and the Misses COOMBES (daughters). The following were the wreaths: "From his loving wife and devoted daughters, 'Peace, perfect peace' "; "A tribute of love from his devoted daughter Ethel"; "In loving memory of our dear kind father, from Harold and Anita, 'Peace, perfect peace' "

; "In loving memory of our dear father, from John and Mabel, 'Come unto Me ye weary, and I will give you rest' " ; "In loving memory of our dear uncle, from all at Putney"; "In loving memory of the kindest of uncles, from Frances" ; "In affectionate remembrance from Walter and Ellen" ; "In loving memory from Mabel, Nell, Daisy, and Amy" ; "In ever loving memory from Percy, Emily, and family" ; "From brother Ernest and wife, with loving sympathy" ; "From Florence, Lilian, Hilda, Arthur, and Charles, nieces and nephews at 24 Park-road, with loving remembrance"; " In affectionate remembrance from Jack" ; "With respect and deep regret from the employes" ; Mr. and Mrs. C. S. QUELCH and Will; Mr. and Mrs. HACKSHAW; " A tribute of regret from one whom he befriended" ; "With much sympathy from a humble friend" ; Mrs. URRY; Mr. and Mrs. E. C. GOBLE; Mrs. DOWN and family; Lieut.- Col. CRADOCK; Henry and William Edgar WEEKS; Mrs. MAYO; Mr. and Mrs. C. LOADER; Mr. and Mrs. E. G. STROUD and family; Mr. and Mrs. G. WILLS; George, Arthur and Charles LOCKE; James BATCHELOR; Miss WHEELER; E. R. RATCLIFFE; "Kind remembrances from four old friends, James LOWE, Edward HOOPER, Tenison SMITH, and H. P. CHIVERTON" ; Mrs. GAUSSEN and Miss Cole HAMILTON; Mrs. WYLES and Family; Mr. and Mrs. T. ASHTON, Mrs. KIDSON, and Mrs. JOLLIFFE; F. and M. WEBB.

Before the business commenced at the Ryde Borough police-court on Monday, the Mayor (Mr. Michael MAYBRICK) said: I must delay the business of the Bench for one moment while I refer to the sad occurrence of the death of Ald. COOMBES which took place this morning. Ald. COOMBES was a great well-wisher of and worker in the town, was a prominent figure in the borough, and took an interest in all its affairs. He was associated with us only two years ago, being then the chief magistrate of this town, and I am sure we all sympathise and condole with the family who are left to mourn his sad loss.

A special meeting of the Ryde Town Council was held on Thursday afternoon, when there were present the Mayor (Mr. Michael MAYBRICK, J.P.), Aldermen E. GROVES, J.P. , S. FOWLER, J.P., A. G. MILLWARD, J.P., C. C., H. SWEETMAN, J.P., and G. E. MEARS, Councillors J. B. PURNELL, L. J. SOUTER, A. TEAGUE, C. J. DE LAUNAY, J. I. BARTON, E. G. STROUD, G. GARRETT, G. A. BLACKALL, J.P., A. S. MARLOW, and J. HANSFORD.- The Mayor said that it was his duty to move that a resolution of condolence be forwarded to the family of the late Ald. COOMES. The memory of the late Alderman would remain with them for many years to come. He had been a Councillor for a number of years, and had made himself agreeable to every member. He was a hard worker, and whether as chairman of the Public Works Committee or in any other capacity nothing was too much for him to do for the good of the town. Certainly, he won the hearts of the Council and was a most popular man amongst them. He (the Mayor) hoped that Ald. COOMBES's memory would ever remain green with them. Other members of the Council might be more able to speak on the matter than he was, but he wished to propose the following resolution: " That this Council conveys its most sincere expression of sympathy with Mrs. COOMBES and the members of the family of the late Ald. COOMBES in their deep bereavement, and desires to place on record its very great appreciation of the long and valuable services given by their old colleague to the business of the town, and especially to give expression to their regret at the loss sustained by the Council and the inhabitants of the town generally." - Ald. GROVES seconded and said they had paid the last sad token of respect to their friend and comrade, Ald. COOMBES. It was now their desire to express to the widow and family their deep sympathy with them in the irreparable loss which they had sustained. It had been truly said that when the father of a house went, then the glory of the house had gone; and when the mother went, the comfort of the house departed. That applied to all homes, whether exalted or lowly, and they might be sure that each member of Ald. COMBES's family felt their bereavement most deeply. They had all hoped that the devotion shown by Ald. COOMBES's family in his long illness might have been successful in saving a valuable life to them and the borough, but it was not to be, and they hoped that the family might feel some consolation in receiving the sympathy of all. Might the memory of past happy days and hoe for the future, be a comfort to them. All must feel that a strong man had passed away from the Council, for during the past 24 years Ald. COOMBES had done his duty. No one took more interest in the work, and his deep experience and good

judgement were of great value . They would all remember his service as Mayor, when he did his best (as he did on all occasions) to serve the town, and its inhabitants. Not only on the Corporation, but in innumerable other offices, he was at all times anxious and willing to serve the best interest of the town . Ald. COOMBES would be greatly missed. He (the speaker) deplored his loss and would have a long and pleasant remembrance of his genial friendship and his long services to the town. - Mr. HANSFORD supported the proposition, as one who might claim to have had the longest personal acquaintance with the late Alderman. In business life they were perhaps competitors, but he might truly say that not one of his fellow tradesmen had been on better terms with him than Ald. COOMBES. They had always been helpful one to another, and he attributed that entirely to Ald. COOMBES's inborn courtesy and consideration. As a council they had sustained the loss of a member, and he personally felt that he had sustained the loss of a friend. The town was the poorer for the loss of the gentleman they had that day interred.- Ald. SWEETMAN, in briefly supporting the proposition, said that he entered the Council on the same day as the late Alderman, and would like to add his tribute of respect to his memory. He had always known Ald. COOMBES as a straightforward, honourable, and right minded man. He could safely say that he had never met a man who could command the respect of his fellow men to a greater extent than the late Alderman.- The resolution was carried in silence, the members of the Council standing.

Mrs. COOMBES and family desire to return their sincere thanks for kind inquiries and sympathy in their great bereavement and for beautiful flowers sent.

Researched & typed by
Ann Barrett
Kate MacDonell