

A Tribute to the Life of John (Jack) Ernest Michael Marshall

Jack Marshall, while Warden [Mayor] of King Island, died on the 10th of November 1955 and his obituary was published in the King Island News on 16 Novemberⁱ. The words recall the life of a remarkable man, noting that there is no mention of the WW2 King Island War Service Fund – another of his excellently led organisations.

TRAGIC DEATH OF THE WARDEN.

ends career of USEFULNESS.

Many Tributes

From Public Bodies

LARGE FUNERAL.

ON THURSDAY morning last, the death occurred at the King Island Public Hospital of Cr John Ernest Michael Marshall. He was 64, and since 1919 had been Warden of the Municipality, having first entered the Council in 1943.

In town the previous night for public business associated with the visit here of Agricultural Department officials, Mr Marshall was driving home next morning, when apparently failing to make allowance for the sudden constriction of the highway, at the point of its proceeding over Camp Creek bridge, he drove on to enter the creek only feet beside the bridge. The force of the impact must have been very severe and injuries sustained contributed to death in hospital later in the morning.

A Dangerous Point!

Previous mishaps at this bridge has caused the strong local opinion that this is a dangerous point needing attention by the authorities.

The late Mr Marshall was born at Laughton in the County of Essex in England on 28th September, 1891, and was only two years old when he accompanied his family to this country. Living in Victoria, he received his earliest education at Cummoden, and in later years went to the Brighton Grammar School as a boarder.

His father was Manager of the Orient Mail Steamship Company.

Mr. Marshall's first associations with King Island commenced well over forty years ago when he arrived here at the age of about 18. Except for about two years spent in Western Australia, his outlook and interests ever since have been almost completely King Island. His first impressions were of a very different Island than the one of today. To the man of some real vision that he proved to be, however, there was the certainty that here was a land of considerable opportunity.

But to make good it was at times an extremely difficult struggle that must have tested this young man's confidence. Especially was this so when he returned here in 1918 with his young bride — the former Miss Alice Lillian Mann — who he married in March of that year and brought to the pioneering task of establishing a home and living of the soldier settlement farm he confidently named "El Dorado," and is situated on a road that has come to be generally designated by his own name.

A Unique Record.

Mr Marshall, as Secretary and President of the local sub-Branch of the Returned Servicemen's League for the greater part of the period between the two world wars, and afterwards, earned himself the honour of life membership of the movement. The league also conferred on his wife the Certificate of Merit to establish a unique family record in recognition of untiring patriotic service.

Mr Marshall in the 1st World War was successively with the 24th Battalion, the reinforcements to the 12th Brigade and 114th Howitzer Battery saw service during the years 1915 to late 1917 in Egypt, England and France. As a result he was sent back

for discharge in Australia as medically unfit, and his war-sustained disabilities affected him in a degree during all the rest of his life.

On assuming the position Warden, the late gentleman brought to the position such time, energy and drive as probably has never previously been approached. He was an active member of every Council committee at one time or another.

During his term as Warden, the late Cr Marshall, saw much progress here. Electric light, power and a water scheme became actual facts in Currie, and there has been extensive modernisation of roadmaking plant, among other things.

On Saturday last, all shops in Currie were closed, and flags on several poles hung at half mast, as the largest procession of marchers and motor vehicles ever seen here, followed the late Warden on his last journey from All Saints' Church of England through Currie's centre to the local cemetery.

Rev. F. Stewart (former Rector) came from Melbourne to conduct the services. At the graveside, members of the R.S.L. and Masonic order paid respective tributes, and finally the last post was sounded. Among the vast number of floral tributes was one from the Governor of Tasmania. Deceased leaves his Widow, one son (Arthur), and two daughters, Sylvia (Mrs Ransley) and Dorothy. Another son, John, died on active service at El Alamein, Egypt.



A portrait of Jack Marshall shows a man who despite massive challenges soldiered on and achieved outstanding results for the island community he was dedicated to. His RSL badge can just be seen at lower right. Photo courtesy of the Marshall Family.

ⁱ With acknowledgement to the Trove website.