

Death of Mr. W. G. Newman
FARMED WHERE SEVEN STREETS NOW EXIST.
MEMBER OF OLD CHRISTCHURCH FARMING FAMILY.

C.T. December 1st. 1928

With the death of Mr. William George Newman, which occurred at The Homestead, Grove Road East, on Friday, November 23, there passes "one of the old landmarks" of Christchurch, and probably the oldest inhabitant of the town. The deceased lived to the ripe old age of ninety-two years, and only took to his bed about a week before the end. He rode a bicycle until about three years ago.

Perhaps no man has seen the town grow to such an extent as he did—streets and streets of houses taking the place of fields of growing corn and barley. He was born in the old farmhouse which his father, the late Mr. James Newman, built in 1826 in Fairmile Road, opposite Fairmile House. The farmhouse itself is now demolished, but the old barn and cowshed are still proving useful buildings. They are a relic of old Christchurch, and his grandfather dug the clay himself on Town Common with which to construct them.

Such houses as then existed on Fairmile Road were also built of mud from Town Common. The late Mr. Newman carried on farming on pretty nearly 100 acres from this old homestead, and practically the whole of the land is now built on, there being no fewer than seven or eight streets, including Avenue Road, Avon Road East and West, Grove Road East and West, Jumpers Road (where there was a cart track), and Portfield Road.

The late Mr. Newman's father and grandfather were both farmers in Christchurch before him. His father was born in a delightful old farmhouse which used to stand on the site of the Pavilion Theatre, and farmed Fairfield and Bargates. His grandfather, John Newman, in addition to his agricultural pursuits, was Mine Host of the Eight Bells in Church Street, and was elected Mayor of Christchurch in 1845, being succeeded by George Ferrey. A brother of this Mayor was the Newman referred to in Mr. Russell Oakley's account of "The Smugglers of Christchurch and Bourne Heath," being a Riding Officer for the Excise in the town.

Mr Newman's agricultural life recalls the days, too, when Christchurch had a number of breweries. The corn used to be crushed locally, and the barley provided malt for the breweries. We believe that Frampton Bros. were the last to act as maltsters in the town.

The deceased was formerly a member of the Plymouth or Exclusive Brethren, which used to meet in what was formerly a Mason's Hall in Bridge Street, which also was a young ladies' seminary at one time. He subsequently joined the Open Brethren when the Bargates Mission Hall was started some 45 years ago, and was a member there to the last. He was connected with the Brethren for about 60 years.

A steward of Coward's Marsh for a great number of years, the deceased, in his younger days, was also a keen sportsman, excelling at cricket, and a fine shot. On one occasion he killed six wild ducks with one shot.

In 1898 he built his residence, The Homestead, Grove Road East, drawing the plans himself and actually assisting in the construction.

The late Mr. Newman was twice married and had six children by each wife. He first married Miss Best, of Christchurch, who died in 1869, and his second wife was Miss Brackley, of London. Nine of his 12 children, with his widow, survive, the united ages of his sons and daughters totalling 492 years. The eldest, Mr. Jim Newman, is in his 72nd year. Much sympathy has been extended to the family in their bereavement.

The funeral took place on Tuesday afternoon, the route being taken passed the deceased's old farmhouse. Mr. A. C. Froud conducted the service and Mr. Wellman read part of I. Corinthians, 15. Three of the deceased's favourite hymns were sung, including " Jesus,

the very thought of Thee," "The love that Jesus had for me" and "Precious Saviour, Thou hast saved me."

Mr. Froud gave a short address on the subject of "Rest," dealing with it in three tenses, past, present and future. Rest, he remarked, was the heritage of God's children. He spoke of the late Mr. Newman's clear testimony over many years as a Christian, and remarked that the deceased's experience of rest had suggested the subject to him because of his continual enjoyment of all that Christ meant. His witness was clear to the very end, and his attitude was one of keen spiritual enjoyment. "That is the highest tribute that I can pay to him," remarked Mr. Froud.

The family mourners were: Messrs. Jim, George, Frank, Alfred and David Newman (sons), Mrs. Whittingstall, Mrs. Dashfield, Miss Newman and Miss C. Newman (daughters), Mr. Whittingstall and Mr. Jack Dashfield (sons-in-law), Mrs. David Newman (daughter-in-law), Mr. Walter Newman (grandson) and Mrs. W. Newman, Mrs. Edmunds (granddaughter), Mr. Edmunds, Mrs. Leonard Newman, and Mr. Ted Newman and Miss Kathleen ("Queenie") Newman (great grandchildren). There was a large attendance of the general public, among others present being Messrs. T. Budden, J. J. Diffey, Bolton and Watts.

The deceased was carried to his last resting place by four Brethren, namely, Messrs. C. Gillard, W. Starks, White (Jumpers) and W. Trevett.

Wreaths were sent by "Mother and children "; Jim and Lizzie; George, Arthur, Len and Emmie; John and Effie; Walt, Polly, Will and Ted; Violet and Maurice; Bobbie and Doug, (great grandchildren, Reading); Queenie, to "great grandpa"; and Mr. and Mrs. Ellery, Lyndhurst.

The funeral arrangements were satisfactorily carried out by Mr. F. Butler.