



THE LATE MR. J. T. KEATS, S.M.

A widely known figure in State judicial circles passed away on Thursday in Mr. James Thomas Keats, Stipendiary Magistrate of the Wallaroo district. Mr. Keats was in his sixty-ninth year. He was born at **Fisherton, Salisbury Plain**, Wiltshire, England, in 1848, and came to South Australia in 1855 in the ship *Navarino*. He was educated at Messrs. Richard and Burton's schools, and at Mr. Cawthorne's academy. He wished to study law, and entered the office of Mr. F. F. Turner, of Gawler, where he remained for two and a half years. Then he entered the public service in February, 1868, when he was appointed clerk of the Stockport Local Court. Several transfers took place, each of which led to promotion. After a year at Stockport, Mr. Keats went to the Auburn Court, and next to the Courts at Morphett Vale, Clarendon, and Wilhunga. In 1879 he removed to Wallaroo, where he remained for nine years, and he then succeeded Mr. N. D. Bennett at the Moonta Mines Court in 1891. The deceased Magistrate, in addition to the Local Court Clerkship, held the following offices:- Clerk of the Local Insolvency Court, representing the relieving officer to the Destitute Board, clerk of the Licensing Bench, and returning officer for the electoral district of Wallaroo. Besides his services under Mr. O'Halloran, S.M., Mr. Keats sat under the late Messrs. Browne, McDermott, J. Varley, McCullagh, B.A. Laurie, Castle, and J.B. Shepherdson, Special Magistrates, and in 1897 was appointed Special and Stipendiary Magistrate for the northern district in succession to the late Mr. John Rudall. He had an extensive area to look after, and his knowledge of the duties of a Stipendiary Magistrate were comprehensive. Mr. Keats had the saving grace of humour. On one occasion, when asked for particulars of his career, he replied, "There is really nothing remarkable about me except perhaps the fact that all the S.M.'s under whom I have sat save one are dead. I've not succeeded in killing him yet." He has left a widow, Mrs. Louisa Keats (daughter of the late Mr. Henry Phillips, solicitor of Islington, London), and his family numbered seven sons and a daughter – Messrs. H. S. Keats (of Two Wells), A. J. (Noarlunga), F. P. (Orroroo), T. A. (Port Pirie), N. D. (Cowell), C. C. (Adelaide), and G. G. (who is with the A.I.F. in France), and Miss L. L. Keats, of Adelaide. About two months ago the deceased gentleman was taken ill. He returned to his duties three weeks ago before his health was restored. He contracted a severe cold, which led to congestion of the lungs, and that condition supervening on a weak heart proved too much for him.

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