## **COPELAND, Henry Beecroft**

MR. HENRY BEECROFT COPELAND. [1864-1930]

With the passing of Mr. Henry Beecroft Copeland, at his late residence, Northcotte Street, early on Wednesday morning, Bellingen mourns the loss of one of her finest citizens — a man who not only cherished the highest ideals of service in his official capacity as an officer of the Justice and Lands Departments of the State for upwards of 40 years, but who possessed all the attributes of the gentleman and recognised his responsibilities as a unit of the community in rendering excellent service to the various organisations and institutions of the town and district. The late Mr. Copeland had suffered a protracted illness and for the last few months had been completely confined to his home, where every medical care was bestowed upon him. Early last year, on medical advice, he visited a specialist in Sydney and received medical treatment, and while temporary relief was gained, there was a recurrence of his illness later in the year, and although from time to time he enjoyed some measure of improved health, he made no substantial improvement, and a few months ago the trouble intensified until he passed peacefully away in the early hours of Wednesday morning. After death the body was removed to the Church of England where, draped with the Union Jack, the coffin remained until the funeral moved from St Margaret's at 11 on Thursday morning. The services at the church and at the graveside were conducted by the Rev. O. N. Manny, and military procedure was observed, by reason of the fact that the late Mr. Copeland had served as a warrant officer in the Soudan War, and further that he had displayed such keen interest in the welfare and advancement of local returned soldiers and the memorial hall movement. The pall bearers were Comrades Hillier (President), Collopy, Craig and Knight (Bellingen Returned Soldiers’ League) while at the close of the service at the graveside Mr. Climas sounded "The Last Post." Mr. J. S. White attended to the funeral arrangements. Included in the wealth of floral tributes were wreaths from the following organisations: Hospital Committee, the Horticultural Society, the Bellingen Red Cross, the Memorial Hall and Literary Institute committee, the Returned Soldiers' League, and the staff of Messrs Hammond and Wheatley Ltd. The late Mr. Copeland was born at Ballarat, Victoria, on December 9, 1864, and was the eldest son of the late Honorable Henry Copeland, a former Agent-General for New South Wales and one time Minister for Lands in the Dibbs and Stewart Cabinet of this State. With his parents the late Mr. Copeland spent his early days in the Victorian city, but came to New South Wales when a boy, and continued his education in Sydney. Shortly after his marriage he entered the public service of this State on March 29, 1886, and was appointed to the head office staff of the Lands Department in Sydney. In this capacity the late Mr. Copeland displayed special aptitude and his energy and ability found ready appreciation with his seniors and as a reward of three years' service he was sent to discharge the responsible duties of Clerk of Petty Sessions and Crown Lands Agent at Taree, Manning River, where he very successfully administered the affairs of a heavy office. Next, he was transferred to Barmedman, another office at that time which carried a great volume of Crown Lands work, and for six years he was stationed in that district. From Barmedman the late Mr. Copeland was promoted to a similar office at Dubbo, where he remained for another period of six years, before moving on to Grenfell, and some years later again to Bombala, where he remained for a period of twelve years. It was from Bombala that the late Mr. Copeland was appointed as Clerk of Petty Sessions and Crown Lands Agent at Bellingen over 14 years ago. A man of the personality, sterling character, and evincing a keen and genuine interest in every activity and institution created for the weal of the community. The late Mr. Copeland soon established himself in the highest regard with the citizens. He was continuously a member of the Bellinger River District Hospital, and for the greater part of his fourteen years at Bellingen held executive office, in turn as committeeman, president, vice-president, and until quite recently, when failing health compelled him to relinquish, he officiated as honorary treasurer. His association with the institution was one of marked activity at all times, and the institution owes much to the interest of the late Mr. Copeland for its splendid standing at the present time. From his early period of residence in Bellingen Mr. Copeland also took an active part in the affairs of the Literary Institute, and later played a prominent part in the movement which resulted in the amalgamation of the interests of the Literary Institute and the Bellingen Shire Soldiers' Memorial Hall. For the past four years he rendered splendid service to the committee, and for three consecutive years, and right up to the time when his failing health compelled him to resign his office, he officiated as president. The official opening of the fine new Memorial Hall at Bellingen last year marked a culmination of a long-cherished desire with the late Mr. Copeland. In other spheres the late Mr. Copeland was also prominent. He was for years on the committee of the Bellingen Shire Band, and his splendid assistance was also generously given to the Bellingen Agricultural and Horticultural Society, by which organisation his valued services were retained almost to the time of his death as official adjudicator in all cottage garden competitions conducted by the society. He was also the society's patron. Healthy sport and recreation were always encouraged by Mr. Copeland in every centre in which he has resided, and although approaching the age of sixty years, some years ago he was not only instrumental in establishing the Bellingen Golf Club, but for two years in succession he annexed the club championship. He was also patron to the Bellingen Amateur Anglers' Association. Of his work and activities in the official sphere, no better tribute could be paid than the official letter sent to the late Mr. Copeland by Mr. W. J. Roper, the Under-Secretary for Lands, when he conveyed the information that the Minister had approved of the late Mr. Copeland being granted monetary value for twelve months' extended leave of absence, to which he was entitled after 43 years of honorable service. Mr. Roper stated, inter alia, in the letter: "In advising you of the above decision, I desire, on behalf of the Department, to express appreciation of the efficient and faithful service which you have rendered since your appointment to the Department of Lands on March 29th, 1886. I trust that you may be long spared in good health and strength to enjoy your well-merited leisure. In addition, may I express my own personal good wishes for the future." Before his marriage the late Mr. Copeland joined the staff of the Soudan contingent and served in the Soudan War as a warrant officer. The late Mr. Copeland is survived by his wife and a family of four children (two sons and two daughters), as well as one brother. The sons are Messrs Charles Gordon Copeland, of Babinda, Queensland, and Norman Henry Copeland, of Urunga, while the daughters are Mesdames Howard A. Marks, of Bellingen, and F. Watson, of Taree. His surviving brother is Mr. Harold Copeland, stock inspector, Moree.

Bellinger “Courier."**1**

**Bibliography**

1 Manning River Times and Advocate for the Northern Coast Districts of New South Wales (Taree, NSW: 1898 - 1954), Wednesday 9 July 1930, page 3