

PERCY DUTTON BURROWS

Percy Dutton Burrows was the son of John Burrows. John migrated from Cheshire, England in 1855 and, after trying his luck at the Bendigo goldfields, resumed his formal occupation as a flour miller in Deloraine, Tasmania. In 1860 he established a flour mill at Wangaratta, followed by mills at Barnawartha, Albury, Beechworth and Chiltern. John died on October 19, 1904. The *Albury Banner* published his obituary:

On Wednesday morning another old and highly-respected citizen passed over to the majority in the person of Mr. John Burrows, of the Hume Flour Mills. The deceased was 75 years of age, and a native of Kingsley, Cheshire. His father had been a miller, and he served an apprenticeship to the business. In 1855, shortly after the discovery of gold in these colonies, he was attracted to Australia, and like most new arrivals at the time tried his fortune at the diggings. He soon found, however, that for him the true gold mine was to be looked for in the calling to which he had been trained, and of which he had a complete mastery. After a few years wisely spent in gaining local experience, as manager for others he entered into partnership with a Mr. Tomlin, and started a mill at Wangaratta in 1860. The business commanding as it did the large farming district of Oxley Plains and surrounding country, proved highly successful. Seven years later the partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Burrows purchased a mill at Barnawartha, which formed the centre of a very large business that he built up, and where he lived with his family for close onto the quarter century. Some 34 years ago he erected the Hume Flour Mills in Dean-street, Albury, but it was not until 1892 that he permanently took up his quarters in this town; directing from here large branch establishments at Chiltern, Barnawartha, and Rutherglen. During his residence at Barnawartha he took an active part in local public matters, and was the leading man of the place. In Albury he kept aloof from public affairs, but both here and in his former residence his personal probity was universally recognised, and it was always understood that John Burrows' word was as good as any man's bond. This was perhaps the main secret of his marked commercial success, everyone who had dealings with him being a willing witness to the 'straightness' of all his dealings. A man of simple habits: his time was divided between the supervision of his large business and domesticity pure and simple. He was an adherent of the Methodist Church. In addition to his several flourmills he owned a large amount of house property in Albury, most of which he had built himself: and he was probably the wealthiest resident of the town. The deceased leaves a widow and a large grown up family, including Mrs. Fry (Sydney), Mrs. T. T. Quinlan, Mrs. Knell (Melbourne), Mrs. Angus Stewart, Miss Edith Burrows, Mr. Charles Burrows (V. W. Prell and Co., Melbourne), Mr. Ernest Burrows (Chiltern), Mr. Fred Burrows (Bank of New South Wales, Albury), and Mr. P. D. Burrows.

Albury Banner and Wodonga Express, 21 October 1904

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/100602617>

Percy Burrows took over the management of the flour mill as a young man and became very involved with in local affairs. As a local alderman and Mayor in 1916-1917, he was very influential in bring electricity to Albury and his wife, the Lady Mayoress, formally switched on Albury's electricity on Friday July 28, 1916. Among the organisations that Percy was involved with, he was a foundation member of the Albury & District Historical Society and when he died on July 3, 1980, his obituary was published in the Society's Bulletin No. 175 of September 1980:

It is with deep regret that we report the death on 3rd July 1980 of Mr. Percy Dutton Burrows at the great age of 101 years. He retained his



JOHN BORROWS



PERCY BURROWS

faculties right up to his death and his memory for facts was amazing. He was a foundation member of our Society. He was born on 16th May 1879 at Barnawartha, Victoria. Youngest son of John and Eliza Burrows. His mother's love of reading and her big collection of books provided nine of her children with an appreciation of literature. His father was a flour miller who started a mill in Wangaratta in 1860; six years later he bought Indigo Mill and the family moved to Barnawartha. John Burrows bought land in Dean Street, Albury in 1870 and built the Hume Flour Mill. The family moved to "Kingsley" in Dean Street – Percy and the clerk at Indigo Mill rode ponies and led the house cow to Albury. He attended Albury Grammar School, riding to and from school on his pony and enjoying wild races with schoolmates. The school was co-ed and had 45 pupils. The population of Albury was about 5000. He spent a year in Melbourne at an Engineering Works and Night School and in 1897 went to the Chiltern mill for a year, riding his bicycle each weekend the 23 miles to be in time for the start of the mill at 7am. In 1909/10, the Dean Street mill was demolished because it was too far from the railway and the bricks used in the building of the mill in Young Street. The silos were built in 1912 and were the first concrete silos to be built in NSW. Percy Burrows was manager of the Hume Flour Mills from 1908 until it was sold in 1946.

His first wife, Vera Jean Lithgow, was a fine singer and their musical evenings are remembered. They had a son Charles and two daughters Edith (Brooke) and Jean (Laycock). Over 40 members of his family were at his 100th birthday. With his second wife, Mary Dinsmore, he enjoyed 33 years of marriage.

Mr. Burrows was associated with so many activities in Albury: the Albury Trades School which became Albury Technical College; with Rotary, being a foundation member and third president of Albury Rotary; on the Council from 1912-1920 and Mayor in 1916/17 when his interest in electricity lit the town; Albury Rifle Club; Agricultural Society; Albury & Hume Golf Clubs; Bowling Club and with our own Society. He was a great conversationalist and in demand as an after dinner speaker.