

PIONEER PASSES ON.

MR. RICHARD ALFRED TILLS.

USEFUL CAREER ENDS.

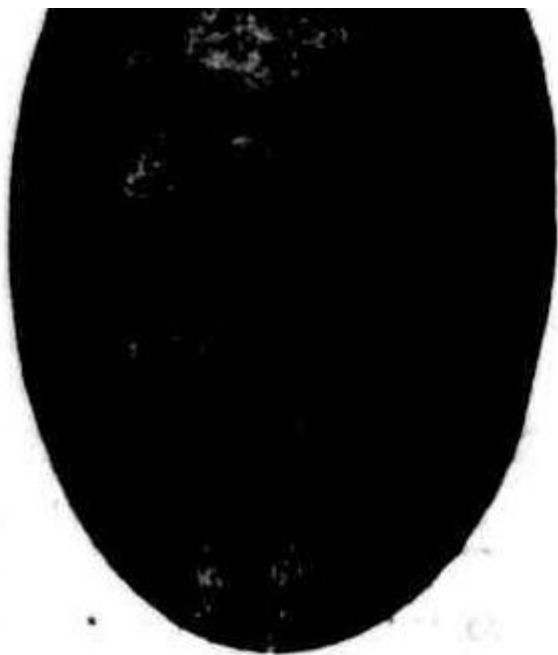
Mr. Richard Alfred Tills, who had been an outstanding figure in the life of the Far North for more than half a century, died in the Cairns District Hospital yesterday morning at the age of 77. Mr. Tills, who was born in Hull, England, came to North Queensland as a young man, and he was one of the actual pioneers who saw Cairns grow from little more than mangrove swamp to a city.

The timber industry held an attraction in early life for Mr. Tills, who, after taking part in pioneering ventures on the Atherton Tableland, returned to the coast and established a sawmill at Jungara. Later he moved to Cairns and established himself on the site where the mills of the Cairns Timber Ltd. now stand.

IN MANY VENTURES.

Mr. Tills conducted his mill there for several years before giving up the timber trade for other pursuits. He essayed mining on the old Mulgrave field, where he owned a water-wheel battery. In later years he was appointed Inspector of Public Works at Cairns, and maintained this position until his retirement some years ago.





The Late Mr. R. A. Tills.

During his time as Works Inspector Mr. Tills was associated with the launching of the Federal Government's soldier settlement and homes scheme in the district.

Like others of that pioneering band who performed such lasting service to the north, Mr. Tills was characteristically reticent regarding his part, though during his long association with its development and public life he amassed valuable knowledge of historic interest.

PUBLIC LIFE.

He was an alderman of Cairns in 1886, and, after a break of a few years, returned to the Council table in 1898, and continued as a member until 1908. In that period he was three times Mayor. Mayoral elections were then held annually. He also took a lively interest in the activities of the Cairns Political Party and political movements claimed his attention for many years.

In 1887 Mr. Tills was a lieutenant of the Cairns Garrison Battery, which was formed by a volunteer corps following the Russian scare of 1892. H.

was formed by a volunteer corps following the Russian scare of 1883. He was the tallest soldier in the company, and in his youth no stoop of the shoulders detracted from his height of 6ft. 8in.

Mr. Tills, who was pre-deceased by his wife many years ago, leaves a family of three daughters (Mrs. L. Barker and Miss Ivy Tills, of Cairns, and Miss Olive Tills, Ravenshoe), and two sons (Messrs. A. C. and R. Tills, of Cairns).

MASONIC FUNERAL.

Mr. Tills was the oldest member of the Gregory Masonic Lodge in Cairns, and he was yesterday accorded a Masonic funeral. Rev. Johnston, of St. John's Church of England, conducted a service at the graveside, and Rt. Wor. Bro. W. J. Calder read the Masonic burial service.
