

Bendigo Cemetery



Notes for John Roberts HOSKINS family grave, #8518 in section A3.  
John HOSKINS took a keen and active interest in public affairs. He was Mayor of  
the city on two occasions.

A sad end was when he took his own life in 1905 aged 69.

John's daughter, Blanche Lois, was one of three people killed  
in the memorable level crossing accident at McIvor Road on New Year's Day,  
1900.

Details of this accident and inquest is a long report,

and is shown on a separate page.

[Link to the LANGLET grave details #15797 in section C6.](#)

[Link to the BURSTON grave details #15801 in section D6.](#)

Images:

HOSKINS\_A3\_002.JPG

to

HOSKINS\_A3\_002C.JPG

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Erected by  
J.R. HOSKINS  
in memory of his beloved child  
ADELINE MILDRED  
who died October 7th 1882  
Aged 3 years and 3 months  
also  
BLANCHE LOIS HOSKINS  
who died January 2nd 1900  
Aged 18 years  
and  
J.R. HOSKINS  
beloved husband of  
S.A. HOSKINS  
and affectionate father of the above  
who died September 5th 1905 in his 69th year  
also  
MELICENT BUTSON HOSKINS  
fourth daughter of the above  
who died October 16th 1917



Burial ground of  
J.R. HOSKINS and FAMILY



The following people were buried in this grave #8518 Sect A3 as per cemetery records.

8518 HOSKINS Adeline Mildred 7/10/1882 8/10/1882 3y 3m  
15802 HOSKINS Blanche Lois 1/01/1900 4/01/1900 18 yrs  
18524 HOSKINS John Roberts 5/09/1905 7/09/1905 69 yrs  
23669 HOSKINS Melicent Butson 16/10/1917 20/10/1917 40 yrs

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*Blanche Lois Hoskins*

**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Wed 3 Jan 1900 Page 4**

Full details of Blanche's accident is shown on a separate page.

**Funeral.**

THE Friends of Councillor J R HOSKINS are kindly invited to Follow the Remains of his late beloved DAUGHTER (Blanche Lois) to the Bendigo Cemetery. The funeral will move from his residence, "Penwinick", Harkness Street, Quarry Hill, This Day (Wednesday), 3rd inst, at half-past four o'clock. WILLIAM FARMER, Undertaker, McCrae Street.

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**BENDIGO TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY**

THE Committee and Members are requested to meet at the residence of Ex-president Cr J R HOSKINS, Duncan Street, Quarry Hill, at half past four o'clock, this day, to Follow the Remains of his late DAUGHTER (Blanche), to their last resting place.

H GREIG, President

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**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Thu 4 Jan 1900 Page 3**

**MISS B HOPKINS' FUNERAL.**

In the afternoon the funeral of the late Miss Blanche Hoskins took place, and the large and representative gathering of citizens who attended clearly indicated the deep sympathy felt for the parents and family in their bereavement.

The cortege left Mr Hoskins' residence, "Penwiniek," Harkness Street, Quarry Hill, about half past 4 o'clock, employees of Cr Hoskins marched in front of the hearse, which was followed by two mourning coaches, in which were seated the relatives and a few intimate friends. The mayor (Mr S H M'Gowan) and Crs Abbott, Lazarus, Harkness, Bailes, Marks and Ryan, and the town clerk came next, while Mr F Richards (city accountant), Mr Richardson (city surveyor), and other corporation officers drove in another vehicle, after which there was a long procession of private vehicles and cabs, extending from the cemetery to Cr Hoskins' residence.

Amongst those present were:- The Ven Archdeacon MacCullagh, the Revs H S Begbie, T Adamson and J W Jones, Mr H Greig (president) and other members of the committee of the Bendigo Total Abstinence Society, members of the vestry and churchwardens of St Paul's, representatives of St Paul's Sunday School and the various organisations connected with it, Messrs W J Campbell (president of the Bendigo Chamber of Commerce), W A Hamilton, MLA, Sergeant Kilfeder, Dr Quick, Mr A Bayne, Mr W Hunter, Mr B Hyett (city solicitor), and others.

The city councillors and the town clerk acted as pail bearers. The coffin, which was made of kauri pine, was covered with floral tributes, while wreaths of flowers

were also hung on the hearse.

The Rev A E Saxon, curate at All Saints' Church, officiated at the grave and read the impressive service of the Church of England, and the Rev J W Jones, by request, delivered an excellent address, in the course of which he expressed the sympathy felt by the whole community with the families who had been bereaved by the sad fatality, which had marred the celebrations on New Year's Day. The mortuary arrangements were carried out by Mr W Farmer.

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and

**THE NEW YEAR'S DAY RAILWAY FATALITY  
PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF CONDOLENCE.**

The shocking accident which occurred on the Heathcote line at the M'Ivor road crossing on New Year's Day was again the subject of general conversation in the city yesterday, the painful occurrence being emphasised in the people's minds by reason of the fact that the funerals of two of the victims took place, the bodies being interred in the Bendigo Cemetery.

There was a large crowd of people at the cemetery in the morning, when young Mr B Burston was buried, and in the evening when Miss Blanche Hoskins' remains were laid in their last resting place the cemetery was thronged to an unusual extent, and on every hand were to be heard heartfelt expressions of sympathy with the bereaved relatives of the victims.

Detective Bersum, of the Railway department, has arrived in Bendigo, and is following up the inquiries made by Mr Deans with regard to the circumstances surrounding the collision between the picnic train and the vehicle containing the private picnic party, and which resulted so seriously for the latter.

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*John Roberts Hoskins*

**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Thu 7 Sep 1905 Page 5**

**DEATH OF MR J R HOSKINS**

**WIDESPREAD REGRET**

The death of Mr J R Hoskins on Tuesday formed, the chief topic of conversation throughout the district yesterday, and on all sides were to be heard expressions of profound regret that such a useful and estimable citizen should have ended his days in such a tragic manner. At the Town Hall and many other public buildings and business places flags were hoisted half mast out of respect to the memory of the deceased gentleman, and expressions of sympathy with the bereaved family were universal.

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**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Wed 6 Sep 1905 Page 5**

**SENSATIONAL SUICIDE.**

MR J R HOSKINS HANGS HIMSELF.  
TRAGIC END OF A WORTHY CITIZEN.

News of a tragic and sensational character was circulated in the city late last evening. It was to the effect that Mr J R Hoskins JP, one of Bendigo's leading and most respected citizens, had met with an untimely end. Later details revealed the fact that Mr Hoskins had taken his life by hanging himself on the South Red White and Blue Company's lease, which is situated on the ranges about a mile to the south west of his private residence at Quarry Hill.

Mr Hoskins, following his usual practice, proceeded from his private residence to his business premises in Hargreaves Street shortly before 10 o'clock yesterday morning. He did not remain long, but about 10.20 drove away in his buggy, some of his employees being under the impression that he had gone out to canvass for orders. This he had never done before, but recently he intimated his intention of adopting the practice.

About 10.30 Mrs Old, a storekeeper, residing at the corner of Russell and Olinda Streets, saw Mr Hoskins driving from the direction of the Three Arch Bridge, turn into Olinda Street, and proceed towards the Great Southern lease, which is situated at the end of the street. Mrs Old noticed that Mr Hoskins, who usually greeted her with a cheery good day, omitted to do so, but wore a strange, abstracted look.

Mr Hoskins evidently proceeded to the end of Olinda Street, and taking the trap a little off the track, tied the horse to a tree, for there it was seen standing throughout the day. Mr Hoskins must then have walked over the ranges in the direction of the South Red White and Blue lease, carrying in his pocket a stout window cord. The ranges to the south of Quarry Hill were very familiar to him, as he made it a practice to ramble among them on Sunday afternoons.

Mr Hoskins apparently reached the lease in question about 11 o'clock. There is a quarry some 20ft deep about 200 yards from the shaft. Overhanging the quarry is a sapling, and to this Mr Hoskins must have attached the cord he carried, and placing a noose around his neck, launched himself over the edge of the quarry, and so strangled himself.

It was not until about 3.30 in the afternoon that Mr Samuel Bolitho, son of the manager of the Great Southern mine, noticing that the buggy had been standing there for a considerable time, determined to inform the police, and reported the matter to Senior-constable Lillis. The latter went with Mr Bolitho, and informed Sergeant Glenny, who, in company with Constable Earnshaw and the other two men, at once drove to the Great Southern lease, arriving there about 6 o'clock.

They commenced a vigorous search of the shallow abandoned holes in the vicinity. A large number of residents of Quarry Hill engaged in the search, including the

two sons of Mr Hoskins. It was growing dark when Mr Harry Hoskins, who was some distance away from the main body of searchers, discovered his father's corpse in the position already indicated. He hastily cut the body down, and it fell to the bottom of the quarry. The body was cold and stiff, death having apparently occurred some hours previously.

The police recovered the corpse, and conveyed it to the morgue at the hospital, while the matter was reported to the deputy coroner, Mr W Webb JP, in the absence of Mr E N Moore PM, at Elmore. An inquest will probably be opened at the hospital this morning.

There seems to have been no reason for Mr Hoskins to have taken his life. His son, Harry, states, however, that his father had not been quite himself of late, but appeared to be abstracted and strange in his manner, as though suffering from mental worry.

The news of the death of Mr Hoskins caused a painful sensation, and profound regret was expressed throughout the city last evening. The upright character and sterling worth of Mr Hoskins, his fearless convictions, and the genuine ring marking all his actions, caused him to be greatly respected throughout the community. As one of the city's early pioneers and staunchest supporters his loss will be greatly felt. The deepest sympathy is extended by the citizens to his widow and family.

The late Mr John Roberts Hoskins was born in St Agnes, Cornwall, in 1836, and was in his 70th year. In the year 1851 he landed with his father at Sydney. In January, 1855, Mr Hoskins came to Victoria and commenced the arduous life of a miner in real earnest. It was at the latter end of 1856 that he arrived in Bendigo to try his fortunes on the alluvial diggings. He continued a miner's career for a number of years with varying success, working at Epsom and Huntly.

Of an active and energetic temperament, he made his way into public life, and was one of the first members of the Huntly Shire Council, holding the position for two years. In 1868 he became a partner in a sawmill at Huntly, and this was the beginning of a highly successful career in the timber trade. Two years later he entered the business of Mr Robert Hill, who owned the timber yard subsequently conducted by Mr Hoskins, it being purchased in 1872 by Messrs Illingworth and Hoskins. A store in which ironmongery and builders' stores were dealt in was added, and gradually a large and lucrative business was built up.

In 1880 Mr Hoskins became sole proprietor of the business, which has continued to thrive and expand in his hands up to the present time. Mr Hoskins always took a keen and active interest in public affairs, and in 1888 he was elected to the City Council, representing Sutton Ward. He held office until 1902, when he retired. He



was Mayor of the city on two occasions, viz, in 1890-1, and in 1901-2.

The latter year was one of great interest, marking the jubilee of the discovery of gold on Bendigo, and was celebrated by an important exhibition. In 1894, Mr Hoskins was a candidate for the Sandhurst seat in the Assembly, but was not successful, being third on the poll.

Throughout his career Mr Hoskins was a staunch temperance advocate, and he firmly adhered to these principles when Mayor of the city. He took an active part in temperance work, and was a prominent member of the Total Abstinence Society, and one of the trustees of the Temperance Hall. He frequently presided over public temperance gatherings, and recently propounded a scheme for the extension of the scope of the work by the addition of a series of club rooms to the Temperance Hall.

Unfortunately, he did not live to see this work accomplished. Mr Hoskins closely identified himself with charitable institutions of the city, and was up to the time of his death a member of the hospital committee. He occupied the position of president for a number of years.

He took a deep interest in the Easter Fair movement, and as treasurer rendered great service to the charities. He was a life governor of both the Hospital and Benevolent Asylum. Mr Hoskins was a Freemason, and only last week was elected treasurer of the Corona Lodge. He was a staunch adherent of the Church of England, and was hon treasurer of the See House committee.

Mr Hoskins was married in 1858 to Miss Butson, at the Wesleyan Church, Forest Creek. His widow and six children survive him, including two sons and four daughters. One daughter, Miss Blanche Hoskins, died from injuries received on New Year's Day, 1900, when a train collided with a vehicle at the M'Ivor Road crossing on the Heathcote line.

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#### **Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Thu 7 Sep 1905 Page 5**

##### **THE INQUEST.**

Some slight delay was occasioned in holding the inquest, owing to the absence of the coroner (Mr E N Moore PM) at Rochester. The deputy coroner (Mr W Webb JP) was communicated with, but he preferred that the inquiry should be conducted by the coroner. A telegraphic message was despatched to Mr Moore PM, who agreed to immediately return to Bendigo, and arrangements were made for the holding of the inquiry at the Bendigo Hospital at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Henry Hoskins, son of the deceased, who is employed as a clerk in his father's establishment, deposed that he last saw his father alive at 10 am on Tuesday, when he left the shop in Hargreaves Street in his trap.

The deceased appeared to have been worrying a good deal over business matters and other affairs for a fortnight or three weeks past. He had complained of feeling unwell in his head, but he would not lie up. He said that a doctor could do nothing for him. Witness never thought any more of his father's absence from the shop until the afternoon about 4 o'clock, when someone acquainted him of something being apparently wrong.

Mr Bolitho came to the shop, driving the horse attached to the buggy, which, he said had been standing in the bush at Solomon's Hill since 10 o'clock that morning. Witness and his brother then immediately drove to the locality where the horse and buggy had been standing.

A search was made, along with others in the vicinity. Witness at length found his father's body hanging from bush overhanging the bank of a quarry. Witness cut the cord, and the body, which was stiff and cold, fell to the bottom. Witness then proceeded home, and after informing the household acquainted the police. Witness knew no reason other than the state of his health why his father should commit suicide. Business worries and overwork might have been the cause.

Augustus Austin Hoskins, another son of deceased, who recently returned from China, gave corroborative evidence. He stated that he had noticed his father's strange and absent minded behaviour of late.

Albert Braddish, a resident of Golden Square, deposed that he knew the deceased. He last saw him near the Great Southern mine as he was leading the horse into a bush track preparatory to tying it up. Witness said. "Good morning, Mr Hoskins, its very cold." and the salutation was answered by deceased. As witness passed on he saw deceased tie the wheels of the buggy. He noticed nothing unusual or strange in deceased's manner.

Samuel Bolitho, blacksmith, deposed that when going to work at the Yankee mine on Tuesday, he was informed that a horse attached to a buggy was standing on the top of the hill. He thought nothing more of the matter until he noticed the turnout still there when returning home at 3.30 pm.

Eventually he took the horse and buggy, which he recognised as Mr Hoskins's, to the Quarry Hill police station, and afterwards drove it to the shop. He asked for Mr Hoskins, and the son informed him that he did not know where his father was. Witness told him of the discovery of the turnout in the bush, and the sons immediately went in search of deceased. The body was found 300 or 400 yards from the spot where the buggy was standing.

Dr W Bottomley deposed that he had made a superficial examination of the body,



and found that death was one to suffocation caused by strangulation through hanging. The coroner, in entering up a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony, deplored the sad occurrence, which, he said, was very much to be regretted. Anyone who had known the late Mr Hoskins would recognise that he was a man who would never do such a thing when he was in his sound senses.

The deceased had been a highly useful citizen, and he had evidently taken his life in one of those temporary fits of insanity that followed people suffering from nervous affections. He had, accordingly to the evidence, been in bad health, and had become despondent. He was therefore in such a state that he was not at the time responsible for his actions, and hanged him- self while temporarily of unsound mind.

A verdict was recorded accordingly.

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**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Thu 7 Sep 1905 Page 5**

**FUNERAL TODAY**

The funeral will take place from the private residence, in Harness Street, Quarry Hill, to the Bendigo Cemetery at 11 o'clock this morning. By special request there will be no official representation of public bodies, but it is understood that in some cases members will attend privately. The members of the board of management of the Bendigo Hospital are elsewhere requested to meet at Mr M'Gowans office this morning at 10.45 to attend the funeral of the late president.

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*Melicent Butson Hoskins*

**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Fri 19 Oct 1917 Page 1**

Family Notices

HOSKINS.

The Funeral of the late Miss MELICENT BUTSON HOSKINS, fourth daughter of the late Mr J R Hopkins, will move from the Bendigo Railway Station, on Saturday the 20th, on arrival of the afternoon train from Melbourne, due at 4.45, for the Bendigo Cemetery. No flowers by request.

WILLIAM H OAKLEY

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**The Bendigo Independent (Vic. : 1891 - 1918) Mon 22 Oct 1917 Page 3**

**OBITUARY**

The funeral of Miss Milicent Butson Hoskins, fourth daughter of Mrs and the late J R Hoskins, took place on Saturday afternoon, moving from the Bendigo Railway Station on arrival of the Melbourne train. It was attended by many friends. The place of interment was in the Church of England portion of the Bendigo Cemetery. The coffin bearers were Dr Cook, Messrs W J Campbell, G Hyett, G D Garvin, A M Drummond, E Thomas, J B Edwards, members of the I.O.R. Lodge and Bendigo Total Abstinence Society. The pa Richards, A J Pearce and J H Craig.

Representatives of All Saints' Church and Sunday School, of which deceased was a former teacher also attended. The Rev Dean Percival, who attended the funeral, officiated at the grave. Oakley conducted the funeral arrangements.

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Compiled by Pat & Ian Belmont  
in June 2019  
for the Bendigo Cemetery Obituaries & Notes