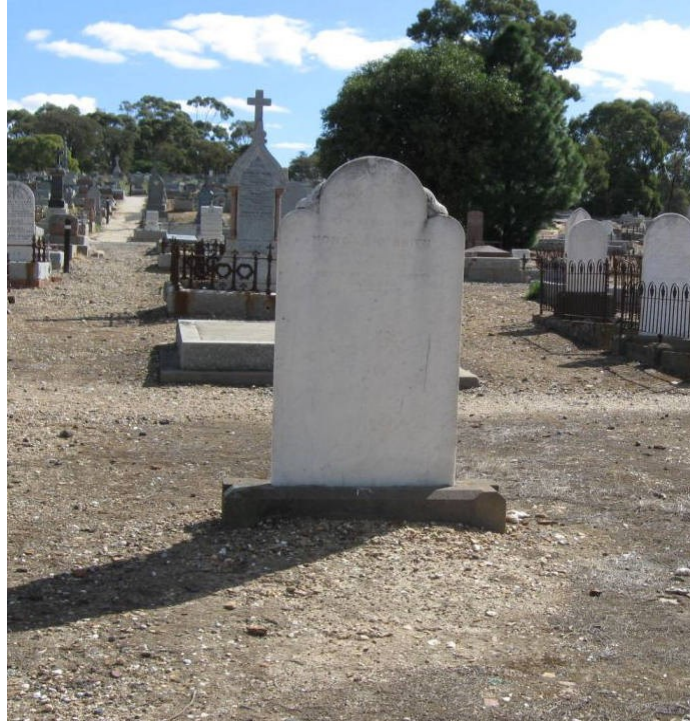


### Bendigo Cemetery



Notes for Morgan O'Brien Grave #8794 in section I5.  
Morgan O'Brien, chemist, who died alone on June 27th, 1883, aged 80 years.  
And was buried alone without the grave service from his own church.

Images:  
OBRIEN\_I5\_059.JPG  
to  
OBRIEN\_I5\_059B.JPG

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Sacred to  
the memory of  
MORGAN O'BRIEN  
Died June 27th, 1883  
Aged 80 years  
Native of County  
Limerick  
Ireland



Only Morgan O'Brien is buried in this grave #8794 Sect I5 as per cemetery records.

*Morgan O'Brien*

**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Fri 29 Jun 1883 Page 3**

**DEATH OF MR MORGAN O'BRIEN.**

The numerous friends of Mr Morgan O'Brien, chemist of High Street, will learn with regret that that gentleman has met with a sudden death; and the most melancholy feature of the sad event is that he died alone and untended from unknown causes. His dead body was discovered last evening in the premises occupied by him by Mr Robt Burrowes MLA. The last time he was seen alive was on Tuesday evening, when he called at Mr Burrowes, when on being invited to take tea he declined, stating that he felt unwell and wished to get home.

Yesterday morning Mrs Burrowes sent him down the Argus, of which he had daily the loan, and the messenger finding the place closed, slipped it under the door. Last evening Mr Burrowes requiring the paper, sent for it, but was informed that the doors were still locked. Thinking he might have gone to the European Hotel, where he was in the habit of getting his meals, he instructed the messenger to go again in about half an hour. In the meantime Mr Bockelman, of the European, called upon him, and informed him that Mr O'Brien had not been as usual to the hotel for two days, and as his place was locked up, he was afraid he must be lying ill, and unable

to get up.

Mr Burrowes at once proceeded to his residence, and breaking open the door found him lying dead on the floor. His bed had been made and had been undisturbed. Information was given to the police, and we presume a coronial inquiry will be held. The deceased gentleman was a native of Limerick, Ireland, was a chemist by profession, and was about 70 years of age.

He was not more than 19 or 20 years of age when he arrived in New South Wales, where he was for some time in the Government service, having held the position of Clerk of Petty Sessions in a provincial town. His career has been a somewhat chequered one. He came to Bendigo at an early period of the goldfield, and became possessed of some property, now of considerable value, in High Street, which he disposed of some years ago, and left to take charge of a friendly societies' dispensary at Emerald Hill. He was also for some time assistant in a chemist's establishment at Broadmeadows.

About 15 years ago he was an active member of the committee of the Sandhurst Mechanics' Institute. Having returned to Sandhurst from his sojourn in the neighbourhood of Melbourne some years since, he set up in business in the premises occupied by him at the time of his death. He was a well educated man, of extensive reading, especially in history, and was possessed of a highly retentive memory.

For a long time he had been a contributor to the local press, and some of his literary productions have attracted much attention. He was a gentleman of high integrity, and of a most kindly disposition, ever ready when it was in his power to render a good turn to any one standing in need of assistance.

Many will be ready to acknowledge his good offices, and will deeply deplore his sudden and unhappy end. His connection with this journal of late years placed him on terms of intimacy with the staff, amongst the members of which he was a general favourite. He has friends in Sydney, but no relatives, it is believed, in the colonies.

He lived alone, and it was feared just what has happened would be found to have occurred. The duty of recording the lamentable fact is an extremely painful one, and we are unable sufficiently to express our sorrow and regret that his illness should have been unknown to any of his many friends, who would most willingly have rendered such assistance and attendance as he might have required. We can only hope that he felt no want, and died without pain. The funeral will take place this afternoon at two o'clock.

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**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Sat 30 Jun 1883 Page 1**

**THE DEATH OF MR MORGAN O'BRIEN.**

Yesterday morning the coroner conducted an inquiry into the cause of the death of Mr Morgan O'Brien, who was found lying dead at his shop in High Street on Thursday evening by the hon R Burrowes, and Messrs Bockleman and W Bradley. As will be seen by the medical testimony, hereunder given, Mr O'Brien, who was for some time been suffering from pains in the chest, died from congestion of the lungs.

So far as is known he died intestate, and yesterday Mr Strickland informed Messrs L Macpherson and Co, the Sandhurst agents for the curator of intestate estates, of that fact, and the contents of the shop and of the rooms in which Mr O'Brien resided were taken possession of by the agents of the proper authority. It would appear that the deceased, although not in want of the bare necessities of life, had been for some time past in straitened circumstances, this presumption being based on the fact that he had lately, disposed of portions of the shop fittings in a market where he would have to sacrifice them.

The remaining portion of his possessions is of little value. He seems to have enjoyed the kind regard of all his neighbours, including Mr Burrowes, who, as is already known, took considerably more than an ordinary interest in his welfare. Mr O'Brien did not hint that his business was not lucrative, nor complain of his wants, being evidently a silent sufferer, as, excepting when, by his friends, in a considerate manner interrogated as to his health, he was loth to make any complaint.

It was stated in yesterday's issue that Mr O'Brien, at the time of his death, was 70 years of age. It now appears that he was much older. Dr Eadie, who made a post-mortem examination of his body, stated that it was that of a man of about 80 years of age, but facts have been elicited proving that Mr O'Brien was 84 years of age.

The following is the evidence taken at the coronial inquiry:-

Mr Robert Burrowes deposed that he knew the deceased since the year 1851. He was a chemist, and for the past eight or nine years he had been a tenant of witness's in High Street, where he kept a chemist's shop. Witness saw him on Monday, 25th inst. He came to witness's residence on Tuesday evening to return the Argus newspaper, which he was in the habit of borrowing. Witness sent his son to the door to ask him to come to tea, but the deceased declined to do so, saying that he was too ill.

That night witness left for Melbourne, and returned late on Wednesday night. On Thursday he was informed that the deceased had not been about for two days, and witness went to the shop and knocked, but could not get any reply. Subsequently, in company with Mr Bockletnan and Mr W Bradley, he burst open the back door,

and upon entering an inner room they found the deceased lying dead on the floor; he was dressed, less his coat and hat, and the bed alongside had been unoccupied.

Witness locked up the house, and gave information to the police, and gave them the key, with instructions to inform the coroner. The deceased must have died on Wednesday, the 27th inst, as the newspapers of that date were found under his shop door unopened. Witness did not know that the deceased had any relatives in the colony of Victoria. Witness believed that the deceased died intestate.

Matilda Roberts, residing in High Street, deposed that at about twelve o'clock on Tuesday night, the 20th inst., while witness was standing at the door of her shop waiting for her husband, she heard the deceased open the front door of his shop and come out. He passed witness, going in the direction of Golden Square. Witness soon after retired to rest, and did not hear the deceased return. Deceased did not speak to witness when passing, which was an unusual circumstance, as he was generally very communicative. He, however, did not appear to have anything the matter with him.

Mary Walker, licensee of the Blue Bell Hotel, High Street, deposed that she had known the deceased for many years. He was in the habit of coming to witness's hotel about eleven in the evening to have a chat with a friend he used to meet there. Witness last saw him alive on Tuesday night at about midnight. He came in about half-past eleven, and had a conversation with Mr Kelly, a boarder at witness's hotel. Deceased complained to witness of great pain in the chest and about the region of the heart. He appeared to be depressed about the state of his health, but did not complain. Witness did not consider that he was in any urgent need of medical aid. He had been ill for weeks.

He took a glass of whisky hot, and left at midnight, jocularly saying, "Good night, old woman; it is time that you shut up the house." Witness closed the door immediately afterwards, and supposed he went home. He was perfectly sober and quite sensible.

Dr James Eadie senr, deposed that he made a post mortem examination on the body of the deceased, which was that of a man about 80 years of age.

There were no marks of violence on the body. On opening the body found the lungs adherent to the walls of the stomach and highly congested. The heart was healthy, as also were the liver and kidneys. The stomach was healthy, but almost empty, only containing a wineglass full of a liquid like water. The abdominal vicera were all in a healthy condition. The cause of death was congestion of the lungs.

The cause of death was ascribed to have been as testified to by the medical

evidence. The funeral, which took place at two o'clock yesterday afternoon, was arranged for by Mr Burrowes, and attended by a number of the personal friends of the deceased.

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**Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Sat 30 Jun 1883 Page 2**

**FUNERAL OF MR MORGAN O'BRIEN.**

Mournful as the funeral of an old and esteemed fellow citizen must ever be to his friends, that of Mr Morgan O'Brien yesterday in the Sandhurst cemetery, was rendered painful in the extreme to those who witnessed it by the manner of his interment. His coffin was lowered into the grave without any religious ceremony. There was no clergyman present; and no one offered or dared to perform the last rites over his remains. And so this fine old man from the County Limerick, in Ireland, a Roman Catholic by religion, a gentleman by birth and education, a colonist of over half a century's standing, and a citizen of exemplary life, moral worth, and estimable qualities, was laid to his rest - "**buried like a dog**" as a spectator feelingly observed.

It seems that in consequence of his non-attendance for some time past at church, the clergy of his own denomination refused, on being applied to, to perform the usual obsequies. It was in vain that Mr Burrowes MP, one of his oldest and most intimate friends in Sandhurst, earnestly besought some relaxation in this instance of the laws of the Roman Catholic Church.

The coroner, Mr Strickland, another friend of the deceased of long standing, on learning the inexorable decision, expressed his wish previous to the departure of the funeral from the city, to read the burial service of the Church of England at the grave; but he was told that such a procedure could not be permitted in the Roman Catholic portion of the cemetery. Therefore the interment took place in the unhallowed manner described. But sincere sorrow was depicted on the countenances of all present, and amazement and indignation on those of some of them.

It was altogether a pitiable scene, revolting to every feeling of humanity, and one which must make a deep and lasting impression in various ways on the minds of all who may hear the sad story. We turn from its harrowing details with intense and indescribable emotions.

*A poor, old, lone man dies - Heaven alone knows in what suffering - in the solitude of his wifeless and childless home, and the lately warm, kind, and excellent heart is flung to the senseless clay as if it had never been a thing of human feeling or of human worth.*

*"Oh, for the rarity of Christian charity under the sun."*

\*

and

The Late Mr Morgan O'Brien.

The remains of this gentleman, who expired suddenly at his place of business in High Street on Wednesday, were interred at the Sandhurst cemetery yesterday. The funeral was attended by a number of the deceased's gentleman's most intimate friends. The deceased had been a member of the Roman Catholic body, but he was buried without any religious ceremony.

When Mr O'Brien was about fifty years of age he enacted a promise from a lady that when he died a **"rosary" should be placed on his heart**, and that it should be buried with his remains.

The lady entrusted with the mission left Sandhurst, and before doing so, charged her sister to redeem her pledge. Yesterday, when the coroner's inquiry was being held, the second lady requested of Mr Strickland to be allowed to carry out her sister's promise. Her request was acceded to, and carried out.

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Compiled by Pat & Ian Belmont  
in March 2019

for the Bendigo Cemetery Obituaries & Notes