

DEATH OF MR. A. LILE

WELL KNOWN PUBLICAN AND SPORTSMAN

Probably the oldest hotelkeeper to have held a licence continuously in one hotel in Taranaki, Mr. Adam Lile, the proprietor of the State Hotel, New Plymouth, died on Saturday night after a long illness. Widely known in business and sporting circles, he was one of the most prominent players of Rugby League football when that code was first established in the country, and twice represented New Zealand overseas. He also took a keen and active interest in racing.

Born at Waitara 69 years ago, Mr. Lile started work at an early age in the bakery business conducted by his father, Mr. Adam Lile, at Waitara, where he had been educated.

It was from Waitara that he proceeded to stowaway on one of the troopships taking New Zealand soldiers to the South African War. Then only a youth of about 17, Mr. Lile found that the war had ended before his arrival in South Africa. His association with the troops was to lead to his desire to join the forces in New Zealand, and he served for some years with the permanent artillery.

Later he entered business on his own account as a baker in Inglewood, before coming to New Plymouth and purchasing the State Hotel 29 years ago. He greatly improved and enlarged the hotel over the years.

THE "ALL GOLDS"

Outdoor sport has always been supported and encouraged by Mr. Lile, who had a distinguished career at the time of the foundation of the Rugby League code in New Zealand. He learned his early football while at Inglewood, and later was a prominent member of the Goldfields representative team at Waihi.

Most of his football, however, was played in Wellington during the time he was a member of the artillery. It was there that he was one of the surprise selections in the first New Zealand Rugby League team ever to leave to tour Britain. The "All Golds," the name under which Baskerville's side toured Britain in 1906 and 1907, included some famous football figures, probably the most notable being "Dally" Messenger, who died recently. Mr. Lile knew of his selection only a few hours before the team's departure, but he managed to secure leave from his unit, and, during the tour, proved to be one of the most versatile forwards in the side.

Two years after returning to New Zealand, he was again selected in a New Zealand League side which toured Australia with a considerable measure of success. Mr. Lile saw the establishment of the League code in Taranaki in 1908 when he travelled from Wellington at the invitation of the Taranaki players to strengthen their side for the first representative game ever played here. Taranaki's win by five points to three over Auckland created more than passing interest at the time because Auckland had become established as the stronghold of the code.

In later years, Mr. Lile was a keen golfer as a member of the New Plymouth Golf Club and devoted some of his leisure to bowls, being a member of the New Plymouth Bowling Club.

Mr. Lile was a prominent Taranaki racing owner for many years. One of the first horses to carry his colours was the competent jumper Paraoa. Omeo, a product of the Taranaki hunting field, was a good winner for Mr. Lile and scored his most important success in the 1933 Wellington Steeplechase. Another brilliant jumper who gained success for Mr. Lile on metropolitan courses was the speedy Illuminate.

Mr. Lile was a good buyer at the National sales, one of his best yearling purchases being Huatoki, who established a New Zealand 10-furlong record in the 1952 Summer Cup at Ellerslie. Huatoki and the promising novice Ngatoki, who was recently placed, remain in the Lile interests. Other gallopers raced by Mr. Lile include Trig Station, Silver Sam, Royal Bengal, Brookland and Sly Robin.

Mrs. Lile died two years ago, and Mr. Lile is survived by two daughters and two sons, Mesdames T. Allen (Hamilton) and D. Waldie (New Plymouth) and Messrs. Addie and Pat Lile (New Plymouth). The funeral will leave St. Joseph's Church, New Plymouth, tomorrow morning for Te Henui cemetery.