

more and more by the community. The college, if properly organised and managed, will create a spirit of comradeship. Perhaps some day, too, there will be a common university badge instead of, as at present, one badge showing the student's ability to pay for sports and another for the arts and sciences, but none for the university itself. The new Bill recently passed in the New South Wales Parliament will mean the addition of at least 200 scholars to the Sydney University by means of scholarships each year. There seems to be some fear that these scholarships will become gifts to the section living nearest the university gates. I sincerely trust that this will not be true of the Adelaide University, but that by ensuring a passage for deserving students from the kindergarten to the university we will realise, as did the Athenians, that the ideal State does not consist of walls or ships, but of men—trained men, able to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the duties necessary to the service of the State."

The Mail
January 31st 1914

MR. ROBERT BARR SMITH.

PIONEER, MERCHANT
 PRINCE, PUBLIC
 BENEFACTOR.

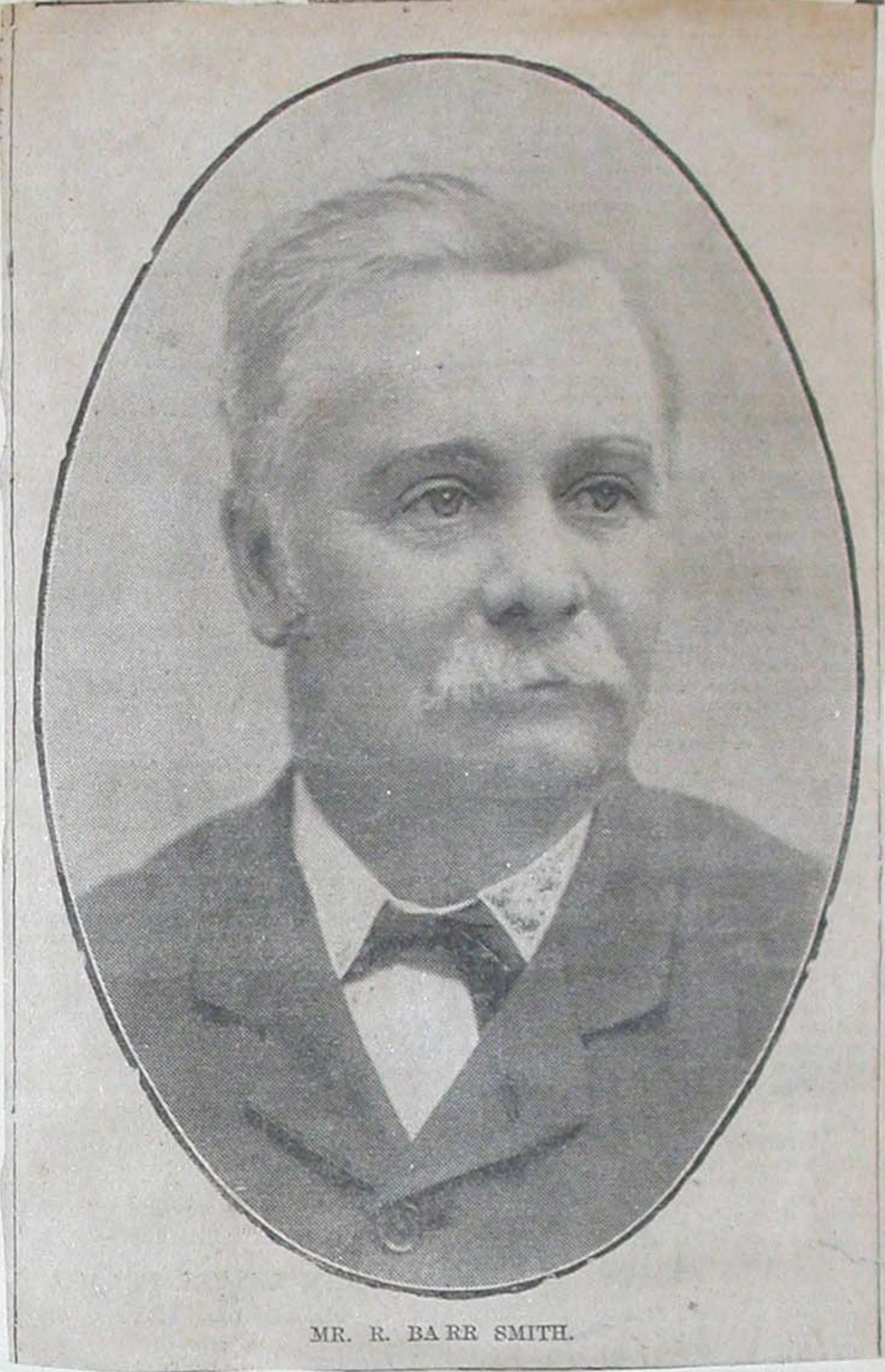
By Fred. Johns, in the "Sydney Mail."

On Wednesday next Mr. Robert Barr Smith, of Adelaide, will attain his ninetyeth year. He is a remarkable man. Not much is heard concerning him in public nowadays, nor is much read about him in the newspapers; but he has been a power in his day, and is still a force in the life of the community. In the brief summary of Mr. Robert Barr Smith's career in "Notable Australians" I refer to this Grand Old Man of Australia as having been "largely interested in pastoral properties, and identified with many public, patriotic, and philanthropic movements, to which he has given most liberally, his munificence including notable gifts to the State, University, the church, and many institutions." If he could have had his way, even that inadequate and all too brief biographical note would never have been printed. He detests display. He has

an expansionist in its broad and better sense, a keen advocate of development on sound, sane lines. Had he played his part on a bigger financial stage, such as the United States, his possessions might have rivalled those of his countryman Andrew Carnegie. But for such men as Mr. Barr Smith and his illustrious brother-in-law, the late Sir Thomas Elder, another notable benefactor, Australia, particularly South Australia, would have fared badly in the critical years of our economic growth. Some day Mr. Barr Smith's life may be written. When the time comes Sir Sidney Lee will, of course, not fail to note that the "Dictionary of National Biography" will be sadly incomplete without an extensive record of this merchant prince and philanthropist, whose name will live so long as Australia has a history.

IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE.

No monument in marble or bronze is needed to attest his worth. The memory of his public service, and of his good deeds is written in the hearts of the people among whom he has lived. Not that he wants it, or has ever sought the distinction, but, strange to say, his name so far has not been conspicuously included in South Australian nomenclature. I believe there is a Barr Smith avenue at the old Ridge Park, Glen Osmond, where he used to live. What an insignificant mark of remembrance for such a man! I believe David Lindsay, who led the Elder expedition across unexplored territory of South and Western Australia in 1831-2, named a mountain range in honour of Mr. Barr



MR. R. BARR SMITH.

a shrinking sensitiveness and distaste for prominence of any kind, especially records in print of his public gifts, preferring that his donations, be they large or small, should be accepted without any fuss. Yet Mr. Barr Smith's career is worthy of a special volume all to itself, for he has been a genius in pioneering development of the Australian interior, a great Australian in every sense, possessing qualities of patriotism, courage, and sincerity in a supreme degree. When in the height of his business career no one knew more of Australian trade and finance. He was always

Smith, who assisted largely in the fitting out of the expedition—but what is a mountain range in a far-off desert, which may not be seen by white men for many years to come, even from the railway train when the iron road traverses from the Golden West?

HOUSE OF ELDER, SMITH, & CO.

For one of his advanced age Mr. Barr Smith is remarkably active. You see him frequently motoring about the city, and sometimes walking along to Currie street to the offices of Elder, Smith, & Co., Ltd., the great commercial, shipping, pastoral, and financial house which in conjunction with Sir Thomas Elder he established and built up to its present magnitude. Mr. Barr Smith entered into partnership with Sir Thomas Elder in 1855. Previously he had been engaged in mercantile pursuits in Melbourne, where he was partner in Hamilton, Smith, & Co. Elder, Smith, and Co., Ltd., one of the most extensive trading concerns in the Southern Hemisphere, has grown with South Australia, and its history is largely a reflex of that of the State. The house is known not only throughout Australasia, but in Empire commercial circles, where it is synonymous with all the best features of commercial enterprise and progress. It is connected directly or indirectly with every important branch of Australian commerce. Its wool business is immense. The firm were pioneers in Australian shipping and commerce, in pastoral development, in the

opening up of vast tracts of country. Under the guidance of Sir Thomas Elder and Mr. Barr Smith, whose names will ever be inseparable from the history of Australian exploration and expansion, the firm paved the way for trade and settlement in much of our inland country, and for the profitable outlet and markets for Australian produce.

INTRODUCED THE CAMELS.

Credit should be given to the firm for introducing to Australia the ships of the desert. In the sixties they imported from India a mob of camels, which formed the nucleus of the teams now working Central Australia. Beltana was the depot for the camel-breeding, whence the ungainly but useful animals have penetrated into wilds which without their assistance would have remained undeveloped. But for Elder, Smith, & Co., Yorke's Peninsula copper mines in the earlier days would have been left in a bad way; it was the substantial advance which this firm made that enabled the mining operations to be carried on and the leases to be renewed. Mr. Barr Smith and his partner became responsible for something like £80,000 in order to keep the Wallaroo and Moonta mines going. In 1888, by reason of the increasing magnitude of the business, Elder, Smith, & Co. was converted into a limited liability company. Sir Thomas Elder and his brother-in-law remained the largest shareholders, but increasing age subsequently necessitated Mr. Barr Smith relinquishing the active work of management. He is, however, still by far the largest shareholder.

WITH KELVIN AT GLASGOW.

Mr. Barr Smith was born at Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire, in 1824. His father was the Rev. Dr. Smith, of the Free Church of Scotland. He went to Glasgow University, and knew the great Lord Kelvin, studying at the university