



# *True Heart Lodge Bishopstone 1884*

## **Anniversary Dinner of the True Heart Lodge (I.O.O.F)**

The members of the above lodge celebrated their anniversary on Tuesday last in the customary manner. By 9.30 a.m. A procession was started, and, headed by the Gorse Hill Band, it proceeded to the church, where at 10 o'clock the Rev. A. J. Pile, the worthy vicar, preached an excellent discourse, taking for his text the third verse of the 4th Chapter of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace".

The 166th hymn was also sung, and then the procession was reformed and proceeded to the Vicarage, where the members were welcomed by the vicar, who, having been treated to a musical ovation by the band, apologised for the absence of Mrs. Pile, who was away from home, or she would have been standing by his (the vicar's) side to receive them. He was pleased to think they were enjoying a fine day. They must look to Him who was above, who had an eye over all, and trust in him for the bonds of peace. The Rev. gentleman also expressed his intention of accepting their invitation to dine with them, and at the same time gave a handsome donation towards meeting the expenses.

The procession then proceeded to the residences of Messrs. W. Dore, E. Stone, E. Cues, & Wentworth, J. Povey, and T. Hickman &c. t all of which they received cordial welcomes. On returning to the Inn, host Westall was in readiness with a most bounteous and well served dinner for his guests, and which was laid out in the recently renovated and enlarged club room. The change from that cramped appearance on former occasions was apparently much appreciated. Between 100 and 120 dined together presided over by the vicar, the Rev. A. J. Pile, who was supported by Messrs. Hickman, A. Dore, Dr. Kennard, Messrs. Stevens, Williams, Dr. Holdsworth, Mr. Parks, Mr. W. Morris, of Swindon, &c., &c.

After dinner the toast list was made as short as possible, in order that the members might get off to the sports that were to take place in a meadow near.

In proposing the health of "the Queen, Prince and Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family", the rev, Chairman remarked on the fact of the Queen's long exercise of power, which had been exceeded by so few other sovereigns. They all hoped she would continue to reign long, and as it was said on the coins of the realm that Her Majesty reigned by the Grace of God, he hoped she would also long reign in the hearts of the people. AS regarded the Prince of Wales, he assisted the Queen in the many duties she had to perform, and he was sure they would all join heartily with him in the toast of "long life to the Queen to the Prince and Princess of Wales".

The toast was received with musical honours by the band. Mr. Hickman proposed the next toast, "The Bishop and Clergy of all denominations". He said it had fallen to his hands to perform a duty which he

wished had fallen to abler hands. He would ask them to drink to the health of their able and worthy vicar (applause, and the toast was received with musical honours).

The Chairman, in reply, thanked all present for the kind way they had responded to the toast of his health. Referring to the diocese, the rev. gentleman remarked that at one time the country was divided into parishes in such a manner that all means of grace were brought within the reach of all, but the population had so increased that it was found impossible that the old divisions should meet their requirements, and therefore it was that an affinity existed between the clergy of the Church of England and the ministers of other denominations, and the right hand of fellowship was held out. It was sure the Bishop had the good of the whole of his parishes at heart.

The next toast was proposed by the Chairman. It was one, he said, that came home to them all; he had to propose the "Grand master and Board of Directors and officers of the Highworth District". He thought that those who had read the account of the recent meeting at Reading would agree with him that much had been done by the society. He need scarcely commend Mr. Joseph Povey to them to respond to the toast (applause); his work in the district was well known to them. They would wish all success to him.

Mr. Povey returned his sincere thanks to the chairman and all. He could assure them of his continuing to do his best. He saw from the grand Master's statement at Reading that they had initiated during the last year 38,501 new members, whilst the colonies had increased 3,011, making a total enrolment of 41, 512 members in the Manchester Unity. During the same period £431,127 4s. 5d. had been paid away as sick benefits, whilst £116,247 4s. 3d. had been paid as funeral money on the death of members or member's wives. The capital of the Order was now £5,594,331 1s 9d. (applause). In the face of these figures he was therefore sure the society was going on very well (applause).

Mr. Trenfield, of the Highworth lodge, also responded to the toast on behalf of the district. Referring to his own lodge, he said he was sorry they did not make a large number of young members, but still their finances were good. The Bishopstone Lodge was one of the best in the district, and he was glad to hear had added nine more members this year, and the district was very well satisfied with what had been done. There was one little matter he should like to introduce, and that was the establishment of a juvenile branch. This he thought ought to be introduced in order to gain young blood.

The rev. Chairman, in proposing "Success to the True Heart's Lodge", humoursly referred to the way in which "heart" was spelt on the dispensation board, which had been carried round in the procession. The rev. gentleman had understood the word to be spelt h-a-r-t, and suggested whether the schoolmaster was not abroad. Most sincerely did he wish success to the True heart – h-e-a-r-t Lodge (applause). Mr. Williams said he did not know why the name had been so spelt on the board. He quite agreed with the chairman's suggestion, it should be spelt heart.

Mr. R. Povey, the secretary of the Lodge, responded, and was well received, for which he returned his best thanks. As long, as he held office he hoped to do his very best for them. He had received letters of apology from Mr. Hy. Kinneir, who enclosed £1, and from Mr. Fuller, who enclosed a similar sum. The position of the Lodge was as follows:- Sick and funeral fund receipts – Balance in hand January 1st last, £238 19s 6d; contributions received since £46 10s. 2¼ d.; or a total of £285 9s. 8¼ d., in addition to £4 10s. expended as sick pay for seven weeks and three day's illness. The Management Fund had a balance in hand at the beginning of the year of 314 14s. 7d., and during the half year had been an income of £11 13s.; but against this the expenditure had amounted to £14 14s. 6d.; so that a balance of £11 13s. 2d. now remained. Of their total capital of £298 19s. 1½ d., £279 2s. 11d. was in the Post Office Savings Bank, and £19 16s. 2½d. in the hands of the treasurer. The number of the members on the 1st of January was 80, and they had admitted nine since. He concluded by again thanking all, and hoped next year they would have a still more successful statement to make.

In responding to the toast of the "Visitors", Mr. Hickman said he could but endorse the word of the Vicar as to how glad he was to see young men gathered there on such occasions. They could not – especially agricultural labourers – do better than join the society. It was a society that might be called national, for wherever a member went he could keep his lodge without expense. He had seen, as a member of the

Board of Guardians, the evil effects of many of the other benefit societies that were based on a different principle, whereby members had failed to reap the advantages they had been led to expect at a time when they most wanted them (applause).

In proposing the health of Mr. Kennard, the lodge surgeon, the Chairman remarked they were all dependent on the medical men, and he was sure in choosing Mr. Kennard as their surgeon had given them satisfaction. He trusted, however, they would have very little occasion to call upon him for his services, but he had no doubt if they had he would do his best for them. He asked them all to stand up and drink to Mr. Kennard's good health (applause).

Mr. Kennard briefly returned thanks. They had had but little illness during the last year, but they could not tell what might come next, when they might rest assured of his best endeavours.

The Chairman then, in complimentary terms, proposed "the Press", coupling with the toast the name of Mr. W. Morris.

In response, Mr. Morris thanked the chairman for his remarks and, referring to a remark of the rev. gentleman as to the Press being considered the fourth estate of the realm, thought that at the present time they could claim a still position than that. If it were not for the Press giving vent to public opinions we should soon have a state of things which would be lamentable. The Press was a healthy exponent of public opinion, and did a most valuable and important work when it showed up that which was wrong. But passing for a moment from the toast, he would like to express the pleasure with which he always received an invitation to be with them at Bishopstone on such occasions as the present. He had often had an invitation but had not been able to come. He looked upon their lodge as a downright credit to the village, and doubted whether they would find another village where in such a population as they had such another lodge could be found. Their reserve fund was a very handsome one, and he hoped they would be able to still further increase it, because it was on that they had to take their stand. Referring to the old village clubs, the time was passed by, he considered, for such, and there was no telling the amount of good clubs like the Oddfellows did. The schoolmaster had gone abroad, and there had been a better feeling in villages throughout that country, and the time had arrived when something better than the old clubs was required, and this was met by such societies as theirs at Bishopstone. Reference had been made by Mr. Povey to the Oddfellows meeting at Reading; he himself considered that meeting was worthy of the intelligence of the world; for there was as much brain work shown in the conduct of such an affair as that at Reading, as it was possible to conceive of. It must be a pride and satisfaction to them to know, then, that the best intelligence and wisdom of the world was at this conference working for their welfare. There were few countries where such societies could exist as theirs did, because there was not sufficiency of liberty to permit it. Therefore, he said, when they congratulated themselves on their society they should also congratulate themselves that they were Englishmen. He had ascertained recently that the total amount of funds held by various benefit societies. Such as theirs; amounted to some £20,000,000 and it was marvellous what an amount of good this must do. It was surely an immense stake the working men had in the country in this reserve fund. There were many other points he should have liked to have touched on, but as brevity was the soul of wit, and likewise the order of the day that day, he would refrain. There was one thing, however, the chairman had remarked about the word *hast* appearing on the dispensation board, he, however, thought that was correct, for he had seen on the sign of the inn the picture of a hart or deer, and that, he concluded, was the origin of the name (applause). [It subsequently transpired, however, that on the dispensation board the word was spelt *heart*, and] not, as the rev. chairman had mistaken it to be – hart.

The toast list was brought to a conclusion by the chairman proposing the health of Host Westall, which was well received and suitably responded to.

The company afterwards adjourned to a meadow, kindly placed at their disposal by Mr. T. Hickman, where sports of various kinds – including flat and hurdle racing, tug-o'-war, &c., were indulged in, and a cricket match between Wanborough and Hinton was played. There were also the usual swings, Aunt Sally, knock-'em-downs, &c. &c. , and with dancing the festivities were kept up until 9 p.m., when the large company present dispersed, highly pleased with the day's enjoyment, and we are glad to hear that P.C.

Read had not a single complaint made to him of bad conduct throughout the day. Mr. Westall provided refreshments in the field, and Miss Nash had also tea stalls, &c., there.

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