

Articles Regarding the Lifeboat Catastrophe From the Isle of Wight County Press, January 13 1907

The funeral of the Coastguard Frank HAYNES, and of the fisherman Henry HEWARD, who lost their lives in the lifeboat catastrophe of New Year's Day 1907, took place on Monday afternoon, and the depth to which the calamity had stirred the minds of the community was displayed by the huge crowds which lined the street and literally filled the cemetery, and by the many manifestation of grief and sympathy seen on all hands. The body of HAYNES was taken to his home at the Ryde Coastguard-station on Friday evening. Here the principal procession formed up and started punctually at 2. First came a firing party of Coastguards. A fine stalwart body of men, with reversed arms, the deceased being given a funeral with full naval honours. These men, who had saluted the corpse when placed on the hearse, belonged to the Cowes division, under the command of Commander A. J. HOTHAM, who superintended the arrangements. Then followed the volunteer band, conducted by Mr. FITZGERALD, who played the "Dead March" in *Seul* on the way through Pier Street and Union Street to St James' Church. The drums were covered in black cloth. The hearse bearing the coffin, which was covered with flowers, followed, other Coastguards, their arms tied with black, walked on each side as bearers, lead by Chief Boatman BURNARD. Lieut. BARON and 25 bluejackets from HMS Prince George attended by order of the Commander in Chief. The lifeboat officials present included Mr. KEPPEL, H. FOOTE (District Inspector of Lifeboats for the Southern District of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Capt. E.W. BURT, R.N. (hon. Secretary of the Ryde Lifeboat Committee), Mr. E. CARTER, J.P., Mr. F. PINNOCK, Mr. J. STORY. There were also in the long procession Mr. GAWN and other representatives of the Customs; four of the survivors of the crew of the *Selina* (Messrs G. JEFFERY, E. COTTON, A. REEVES, and D. REEVES). Messrs BARTLETT and LININGTON (2) the other survivors of the crew, rode to the cemetery in a cab, being too unwell to walk. The following were also in the procession: Bembridge lifeboat crew and officials, including John HOLBROOK (coxswain) and R. HOLBROOK (Deputy Coxswain); Coastguards – Chief Boatman WESCOMBE, A. HOGG, and H. SMITH (Forelands) W. H. LANTERN, W. MOSES, and A. CARTER (Bembridge) Ernest BAKER (fisherman), Mr. W. L. MARVIN (Chief Officer of Coastguards, Bembridge), Mr. W. COULDRYE (hon. secretary), Mr. J. PETTY, R.N., and Mr. Thomas JORDAN (representing the Bembridge Lifeboat Committee), and Mr. Edward ATTRILL late coxswain. Messrs F. STURMEY and W. WOODFORD, of the Atherfield and Chale lifeboat, and Mr. James COTTON, of the Brighstone crew were in the procession. There were also present a number of volunteers, under Colr.-Sergt, Instruct COOK, many Ryde Fisherman, employees of the Ryde Pier and the Joint Railway Companies, and representatives of the Ryde Fire Brigade, under Sup't SAPSWORTH, the Newport Brigade, under Cap't N. H. T. MURSELL and Foreman APPAL, the Cowes Brigade, under Cap't J. BILLOWS and Deputy Capt WILLSTEAD, while Capt Oscar REYNER represented the Shanklin brigade. The Yeomanry were likewise represented. The Borough Police were in charge of Chief Constable GREENSTREET. Mr. W. P. BRIGSTOCKE'S motor carriage was also in the procession. The imposing line extended from the Coastguard station to the first cab-rank. The mourners were in four carriages, the first being the Brougham of the Rev. and Mrs Montague FOWLER, containing that lady, the widow, and Mrs BROOKS; the second, deceased's mother and three brothers, Miss WILSON, and Haynes's two little sons, Reggie and Earnest; the third Mrs HAYNES'S father, sister,

cousin, and Mrs LAWSON; and the fourth, other relatives and friends. Flags were flying at half-mast at the Town-hall, the Pier, Coastguard-station, the Castle and many private houses, while shutters were up and blinds down very generally along the route.

At St Thomas's square, the hearse containing HEWARD'S body joined the other procession. The carriages contained the following mourners: Father, G. HEWARD; Mr. and Mrs W. HEWARD and Mr. G. HEWARD; Mr. and Mrs Ernest HEWARD; Mr. and Mrs SALTER; Mrs STRICKLAND; Mr. and Mrs H. ETHERINGTON and Mr. W. REID.

There was a large crowd in St James' Church, the large galleries which run around the three sides of the building being packed with people as well as the body of the church. Amongst those present here, were Mr. Godfrey BARING, M. P., Major SEELY, D. S. O., M. P., Capt. Cole HAMILTON, the Deputy Mayor (Mr. John I. BARTON), Aldermen W. LOCKE, A MILLWARD, J.P., and S. FOWLER, J.P., Councillors F. W. RANDALL, W. E. WEEKS, C. J. DE LAUNAY, A. TEAGUE, A. HOLMES, A. S. MARLOW, W. DORE, and O. JAMES, and Messrs. J. B. PURNELL (representing the Ryde Rowing Club), C. MATTHEW, H. COOMBES, J. LOWE, E. HOOPER, A. DASHWOOD, C. LANGDON, J. B. COOMBES, H.F. WADE, J. F. LEAL, WILKINSON, Grace, Claude SMITH, (Churchwarden), Capt. and Mrs STANNEY, Miss HUGHES (local hon. secretary of the Missions to Deep Sea Fishermen), the Revs. A. G. ROBINSON (vicar of Ryde), W. M. CAMERON, H. B. BREW, and E. Bruce PEARSON. The organist played the German "Funeral March" before the bodies arrived. The latter were received by the Rev R. R. COUSENS, B. A., (the incumbent) and the Rev MONTAGUE FOWLER, M. A., of the Castle, Mr. COUSENS reading the opening sentences. First came the body of HAYNES, the coffin being covered for a pall with the Union Jack, on which was resting a handsome anchor of white immortelles tied with red and white ribbons, the tribute of the Rev. and Mrs Montague FOWLER. Just behind followed a Coastguard carrying a tiny white coffin, containing the body of Haynes's baby daughter who had predeceased him, but was thus borne to her last resting place with him. The smaller casket was placed on the larger. HEWARD'S coffin came next, with three floral anchors resting on it, one of these also being from Rev. and Mrs FOWLER. The coffins were placed between the choir stalls. The father, brothers, sisters, and relatives of HEWARD then entered, and afterwards came HEWARD'S widow, who had to be supported in her poignant grief by the kindly arms of Mrs Montague FOWLER and Mrs BROOKS (wife of the Chief Officer of Coastguards). All present were touched at her entrance, the effect being intensified by the presence of the deceased fisherman's two little boys, and of his aged mother, bent with years and woe. The service proceeded after every available space, even for standing room, had been filled, by the reciting of the usual Psalm. The Rev Montague FOWLER read the lesson very impressively, and the service in church closed with the singing of the well known hymn "Peace Perfect Peace", nearly the whole congregation joined in the singing of it.

The procession then was then reformed in Lind Street, which was thronged with people. The knell of the church was rung as the long line proceeded with stately step and slow to the strains of Chopin's and Beethoven's funeral marches through High Street and Hill Street to the Cemetery. Here the place was filled with people. Amongst others who awaited the arrival of the moving spectacle at the gates were Mr. J. HANSFORD, Mr. W. H. THIRKELL, Capt. UNDERWOOD, and Major ELLERY. Outside the Cemetery gate the firing party formed up across the road, leaning on their

reversed arms, inside stood the band as the coffins and mourners passed within. At the graves, which were side by side, the ground was kept by police and fire brigades. Here the same rev gentlemen officiated. The Rev, R.R. COUSENS gave an address. He said he could not let the occasion pass without saying a few words. The Lord was speaking not only to those present, but to the whole of Ryde and of the Island, and to all who knew of that disaster, and calling upon them to be prepared. On that fateful night their friend was heard singing the praises of God and pleading with him in prayer. If they believed, whether they were drowned in the waters as these men were, whether they were carried off by an epidemic or met with a railway accident, they would pass from this earthly scene to be present with the Lord. As they left the Cemetery, each asked himself whether he was prepared. The Hymn "Hush! Blessed are the dead" was sung by the choir, the band accompanying. "Eternal Father strong to save" and "Rock of ages" were also sung. The usual three rounds were then fired and the "Last Post" sounded. First the relatives took a lingering glance, into the yawning graves, and then the crowd filed slowly past, and the final scene in connection with the lifeboat disaster sadly closed.

The following sent flowers for Coastguard Haynes: The Rev and Mrs Montague FOWLER; the Mayor and Mayoress, Commander and Mrs Algernon J. HOTHAM, widow and two children, mother and dad, mother and baby George, sister Ada, brother Reggie, the late father and the mother for the baby, brother George, brother and sister (Ernest and Maud), Mrs STOBART, Ryde and Springvale Coastguards, Bembridge Coastguards, coxswain and crew of the Ryde Lifeboat, the local Lifeboat Committee, the I. W. Lifeboat Board ("A tribute to the heroic self-sacrifice of Frank Haynes on New Year's Night"), Chief Officer and Mrs BROOKS, officer and men of H. M. Ships at the Motherbank, the baby's Godmother, Helen BRINKMAN Mr. and Mrs RYALL for baby, Mrs CARR-TATE, A. M. C., Mr. and Mrs H. JAMES, Mr. and Mrs HUMBER, sister Kate and Edith, and Mrs and Mrs A. W. GALE. Heward's flower were from the Mayor and Mayoress, The Rev and Mrs Montague Fowler, Mrs H. B. Fowler (Vernon Square), the Lifeboat Crew, the I.W. Lifeboat Board, the Lifeboat Institute, Bembridge lifeboat, William, Ernest, Maggie, Nellie, Mabel, and Will, Mrs SKIDMORE, Office Charing Cross Hotel, aunt and Tilley, Mr. JOINER, Mrs CARR-TATE, Mr. JOINER, jun, Mr. and Mrs GREENSLADE, Mr. and Mrs H. ETHERINGTON, Ada, Harry and Minnie, Carrie, Uncle William and Aunt Ellie.

Messr's J. PERKIS and Son carried out the funeral arrangements in both cases.

The police arrangements made by Chief Constable GREENSTREET were marked by the greatest possible efficiency and evoked the admiration of visitors from the mainland, who are accustomed to see much greater fuss and much less success.

The Mayor kindly and thoughtfully entertained the visiting sailors to tea at the Town-hall after the funeral.

On Monday evening, a half-muffled peal was rung at All Saints' church by the following ringers as a token of respect and sympathy for the lost lifeboat men: Treble C. STAINER, 2nd H. FAIRALL, 3rd H COOMBES, 4th J. NORRIS, 5th O. COOMBES, 6th P. LONG, 7th R WARD, tenor, W. KEMP. Mr. R. WARD conducted 1470 grandsire changes in 1hr 6 min.

On Sunday evening there was a very large congregation at All Saints' Church, Ryde, it having been publicly announced that the offertory would be given to the mayor's fund for the relief of the sufferers by the lifeboat disaster of last week. The hymn before the sermon was "Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep." The Vicar (the

Rev. A. G. ROBINSON) preached from John 10 and latter part of 10th verse, and John 18th and 13th verses. He said they were taught that all life that of the body as well as that of the soul, was a gift from God and should be treated with respect and reverence. Any wilful destruction of life was wrong. That of men was the highest form of life and one result of Christian teaching had been to deepen their respect for it. Pity was a Christian virtue, and it had led to some of the most magnificent discoveries of the modern world. They thought far more of the man who discovered some means of saving life than of him who had invented a means of destroying it; they would never dream of making a national hero of the latter. During the 15th century there was a great revival of interest in religion in England shown in various ways, such as in church building and in certain great movements which represented the application of religion to common life, and had for their object, the prevention of suffering and the saving of human life; for example, our land had been covered with hospitals. The medical profession was that held in highest honour and they were glad to hear of any fresh advance in medical science. A man could not make a better use of the talents God had given him than the prevention of suffering. All medical men were doing a Christlike work; although they might not all profess to be religious men. Besides these there had been another development inspired by reverence for human life and the desire to banish human suffering as far as might be – the work of the National Lifeboat Institution, which had been very much in their thoughts for the last few days. It seemed almost incredible that there was a time, not very long ago, when sailors had almost less to fear from the storm than from the people who lived on the shores where their ships were cast, who lured their ships to destruction. Thank God Christianity had been doing its work. It's teaching had been taking a rest during the past week. They had seen how splendid was the fruit it could produce on all hands. It was accepted as a self evident truth that a human life must never be allowed to perish if it could possibly be saved. Last Tuesday their lifeboat set forth because there was just one single life in danger. Nobody stopped to ask who the man was, whether he had any special claim on Ryde men, or whether the life at stake was in any sense a valuable life. It was enough to know that there was out there on the water a man who wanted help and help must be given to him at all cost. Nothing made one prouder of one's own countrymen, nothing made one prouder of one's own townsmen, than the knowledge that at times like that there was no difficulty in finding men willing to face danger, to risk their own lives in order to help some unknown brother in distress. As long as that spirit was alive in our midst – and long may it live – they might feel hopeful of the future, there was good stuff in the English character. Of the nine men who started out on errand of mercy, seven were still with them. For their deliverance they thanked God with full hearts. He was sure they would agree with him that it was God's loving care that saved them from their peril during that awful night. They knew themselves to be face to face with Him. There was none of the excitement of the battle field to help them; there was very little they could do to help themselves. At a time like that the strong could encourage the weak with words of hope, and they know they did it. During those long weary hours, each one had to think out his own thoughts. Each one must have realised how little there was to separate him from the great eternity that lies beyond the veil. God had been very good to them. Though no human ears heard their call for help, God heard and watched over them. They were doing a work after God's own heart, and it was impossible that prayers from them could go up to heaven unanswered. He was sure that their hearts, those of their wives, and those near and dear to them, must be full of thankfulness to Almighty God. Their best wish for them would be that the memory of what they went through and what they were saved from

might help them to realise as long as they lived, how very near God they had been to them and how deep was their Father's love for them. God wanted the memory of that night to draw them close to Him. What should they say of the two men whose bodies were to be laid to rest on the morrow? Could men possibly meet death more nobly than they did? They had laid down their lives in the true, Christ-like spirit for some unknown friend, a man whose only claim upon them was that he needed help. Their town was the richer for the example which these two men had given. Their lives had not been wasted; they would treasure their memories for many long years to come. Might the thought of what they did and suffered make some of them feel a little bit ashamed sometimes of their own selfishness, love of ease, and unwillingness to endure hardness in any form. Might God comfort those who mourned and help them to realise that we are making the highest and best use of life when we give it for the good of others. Far better to die in the prime of manhood than live to an old age only to think of one's self. There was such a thing as guarding one's life so carefully that in the end we lost everything. To give one's life ungrudgingly, without thought of self, that was indeed to find the highest kind of life of which man is capable. He was sure they would give to the offertory in no grudging spirit but out of a full and grateful heart. – The offertory was a very large one, namely £20 9s.

The Mayor of Newport (Ald. W. J. WHITTINGTON, J.P.) is actively interesting himself in supporting the raising of the fund, opened by the Mayor of Ryde, as announced last week, for the benefit of those who have been bereaved, and subscription lists have been placed at the banks in Newport. An example of what the children of the Island may do in assisting forward this effort is evidenced by a donation of a guinea from the boys and girls of Carisbrooke Church Sunday-school.

At the last meeting of the Freemasons' Lodge connected to the Society of Vectensians in London reference was made to the disaster which had befallen the Ryde lifeboat, and to mark the sympathy of the Lodge – the membership of which is limited to Isle of Wight men – a sum of two guineas was voted in support of the fund which has been opened by the Mayor of Ryde.

Many touching and sympathetic pulpit references were made on the Island on Sunday to the disaster, and the noble self-sacrifice of the lifeboatmen was eulogised.

Robert Heward and family beg to return thanks for the many kind tokens of sympathy shown to them in their sad bereavement.

SUBSTANTIAL GRANT FROM THE LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution has made a grant of £200, with an expression of very deep regret and with the sincere sympathy of the Committee, to the fund being raised locally for the benefit of the dependent relatives of the two lifeboatmen who lost their lives in the unfortunate accident to the Ryde lifeboat on the 1st inst. Special grants were also made to the survivors and to those who gave valuable assistance on the occasion.