

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 1955

**SEXTON FOR 62 YEARS  
MR. JAMES NORRIS DIES AT RYDE**

Mr. James NORRIS, aged 87, who retired from his duties as sexton at the All Saints' Parish Church, Ryde in 1948 after 62 years in that office, died after a few hours' illness on Saturday at his home, 25 Station Street, Ryde. A native of Ryde, Mr. NORRIS was appointed sexton by Cannon Alexander POOLE, then vicar of Ryde, in 1886, and, in May, 1911, he was appointed parish clerk. He held the record for having tolled the passing bell for three monarchs – QUEEN VICTORIA, KING EDWARD VII, and KING GEORGE V. He had served under the following eight vicars: Cannon Alexander POOLE, Canon John SHEARME, Canon A. G. ROBINSON, Canon Hugh Le FLEMING, Canon G. A. JOHNSTONE, the Rev. W. N. MARTIN, Canon R. S. MOXON, D.D., and Cannon (now Archdeacon) Alexander CORY. Mr. NORRIS was a bellringer for divine service at the church on approximately 50,060 occasions. On Sunday evening a half-muffled peal was rung in his memory.

Mr. NORRIS was born in West Street, and, as a boy, saw the erection of the Parish Church. He began work there when he was 16, and was among the first team taught to ring the church bells. He celebrated his diamond wedding in 1951, and is survived by his wife, two sons, and a daughter.

The Vicar of Ryde (the Rev. R. H. BASSETT, R.D.) celebrated a Requiem on Monday, and in the evening the Archdeacon, assisted by the Vicar, officiated at a choral memorial service. The Archdeacon expressed his appreciation of Mr. NORRIS's long and excellent service to the church. The hymns "Ye holy angels bright," "Jesus lives, no longer now," and "The Lord's my Shepherd" were sung. The coffin remained in the church during Monday night.

Cremation took place at Southampton on Tuesday. The mourners were Mr. and Mrs. L. NORRIS and Mr. and Mrs. A. NORRIS (sons and daughters-in-law), Miss G. NORRIS (daughter), Mr. A. P. BRADING (son-in-law), Mr. J. BRADING (grandson), and Miss G. VINCE (niece). Mrs. J. NORRIS (widow) was unable to attend owing to indisposition.

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