

## The late Mr. William Smith, Ludstone, Kaikoura

General regret (says the *Kaikoura Star* of May 31) was expressed throughout the whole community last week when it became known that Mr. William Smith, of Ludstone, was seriously ill, and this feeling of sorrow was poignantly intensified on Tuesday afternoon, when the sad news was circulated that he had passed away. The deceased gentleman had not been in a very robust state of health for some time, but he was in town almost every day until a week before his death, always cheerful and uncomplaining, and few of his multitude of friends had reason to think that the end was so near. On Thursday week, early in the morning, Mr. Smith had a severe paralytic stroke, which was primarily the cause of death, and from it he never rallied. Despite the utmost medical attention, little hope of recovery was held out, and the worst fears were realised, deceased breathing his last, surrounded by sorrowing members of his family and other near relatives, on May 28. In the person of Mr. William Smith Kaikoura has lost one of its best and truest citizens, in every sense of the words. The soul of integrity and uprightness, he was admired and respected—nay, he was beloved—by everyone who had the honor of his friendship or acquaintance, be they of what class or creed. Courteous, chivalrous, and charitable to a degree (his numberless charitable actions were always unostentatious), he was one of Nature's true and noble gentlemen whose memory will be long revered and affectionately remembered in the district where he so long resided and for which he has done so much.

The late Mr. Smith was born in November, 1832, at Ludstone Hall, Claverley, Salop, England. In 1850, his father and mother, with the family—twelve in number—emigrated to New Zealand, and landed in Nelson. Shortly after their arrival his father died, and the mother being left to look after the family, it behoved the elder ones to help her. Although barely 17 years of age, young William Smith made his way from Nelson to the Wairau, and found employment on Hillersden, Strenvar, and Lansdowne Stations until 1859, when he travelled to the Mackenzie Country to look for sheep-carrying land. Failing in this object, he came to Kaikoura and examined the Tytler run, Clarence Valley, a sub-lease of which had been offered to him by the lessee from the Crown, Mr. C. F. Watts, of Lansdowne. This run had never been stocked, and as there was no road to it, stores and other station requisites would have to be packed on horseback. The country was over-run with wild dogs, which would be a nuisance to stock, for some years at least; again, in consequence of the altitude of the country the sheep were liable to be snowed up. However, Mr. Watt's offer was accepted, and the run was occupied in 1860. The sheep did well and increased at an extraordinary rate, although the flocks had to be driven to Kaikoura every year to be shorn. The wild dogs were systematically pursued and practically extirpated, and although scab existed on all sides of the run, infection of the sheep was prevented by frequent dipping. The first draft of merino wethers sent to the Nelson market realised by weight 25s per head, off the shears. All the wool was freighted to Wellington from Kaikoura in a small schooner at a cost of £1 per bale. In 1870, Mr. Smith relinquished the Tytler run and went to reside on the Ludstone property. Most of the land comprising the Ludstone freehold, 1513 acres, was purchased from the Crown in 1865, but 230 acres were bought from the late Mr. Richard Beaumont some time later. It was mostly covered with fern, flax, and toi-toi, and over-run with silver grey rabbits. Very little stock was carried till 1870, when systematic clearing, ploughing, and grassing began to tell in favor of the stock, and against the rabbits, which were kept down by poisoning, etc. Mr. Smith also purchased the well-known Claverley Estate, at Amuri Bluff, later, and this run, too, under his wise guidance and knowledge became in time, and remains, another model sheep station.

Until recently the late Mr. Smith took a prominent part in local politics. He was chairman of the first Road Board established here, in 1870, and held this office for

seven years. He was also first chairman of the Kaikoura County Council, retaining that position for three years; chairman of the River Board for seven years; and held various positions for many minor bodies. He was also chairman of the Cemetery Board of Trustees since its establishment in 1881. In 1873, he was appointed a Justice of the Peace, the first in the county, and in this capacity his wise and sympathetic administration of the law invoked respect. At the time of his death he was the senior Justice for the district. He had also been patron or president of nearly every athletic and sporting body in Kaikoura, at one time or other, and though he never took an active part in sport, he was always a most liberal supporter of every organisation that he considered deserving.

In Mr. Smith the Catholic parish of Kaikoura loses its most generous benefactor. He was a devoted adherent of the faith, and his benevolence and generosity towards the Church he loved so well will be ever perpetuated by the beautiful altar he gave to the Church of the Sacred Heart.

In 1871, Mr. Smith married Annie, eldest daughter of the late Mr. Joseph Ward, of Blenheim, and she predeceased him nearly 16 years ago. There were ten children by the marriage, and six (three daughters, one of whom is married to Mr. A. G. Campbell, Bank N.Z., Feilding, and three sons) survive him. To them, who mourn for a loving father, and to the other relatives in their hour of great trial, the heartfelt sympathy of the whole district is extended. The community grieves in the loss of one of the district's pioneers and a noble Christian gentleman.

At the sitting of the Magistrates Court on May 30 feeling reference was made to the late Mr. Smith, and a tribute paid to his sterling worth, sympathy, and charity, by all the justices present. Mr. James Davidson said that Mr. Smith had been an honor to the Bench for over 40 years. Always of a kindly and charitable disposition, his justice had ever been tempered with mercy, and an ornament to the Judicial Department of the State had been lost. His whole life had been a most exemplary one, and on behalf of the local Bench of Justices their sincere condolences were extended to the relatives in their great sorrow.

The remains were taken to the Church of the Sacred Heart on May 30. The funeral took place the following afternoon, when all business places in Kaikoura were closed from 1 o'clock until 3 o'clock as a tribute of respect.

The funeral cortege was the largest ever seen in the district, and consisted of over 90 vehicles of all kinds, besides large numbers of people on horseback, whilst crowds joined the sad procession on its way to the cemetery. All classes and denominations were represented, and nothing could exceed the keen sorrow of the people, the passing away of Mr. Smith being felt as a distinct loss to the whole district. His Grace Archbishop Redwood arrived in Kaikoura from Blenheim on Friday night, but was too late to attend the funeral.—R.I.P.

## THE IRISH ENVOYS

Messrs. W. A. Redmond, M.P., and J. T. Donovan, the Irish envoys, had a most successful campaign in the Lismore diocese, in the principal centres of which they appealed for the Home Rule fund, and collected about £1000. Toward the end of May they returned to Sydney, and began a tour of the Western district at Bathurst on June 4. Dates for meetings during the whole of the current month have been arranged.

In accordance with the resolution passed at the last monthly meeting of the United Irish League of South Australia, the executive forwarded by the last mail a draft for £800 to Mr. J. E. Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalist Party. This, with £1000 sent in December last, makes £1800 sent away as the result of the three weeks' tour of the Irish envoys in that State. After all expenses are paid a small balance will still remain in hand.

Tasmania's contribution to the Home Rule fund is expected to total nearly £530.