

Bernard Osborne

Isle of Wight County Press
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NEWPORT

Death of Mr. Bernard Osborne.—By the death of Mr. Bernard Osborne, at his residence 1 Pyle-street, on Saturday morning, there passed away one who for many years was a notable figure in the civil and social life of the borough. For 28 years, until his retirement on account of ill-health in 1925, “Bern” as he was affectionately known to almost everyone, was the huge and genial town sergeant. In his prime Bern Osborne was indeed a commanding figure—6ft. tall, of generous proportions, and weighing over 20 stone, while he had a voice commensurate with his physique. No matter how big the crowd on election nights or other occasions, when announcements had to be made from the Town-hall, his stentorian voice carried clearly to its limits. His voice, too, was often heard at local concerts, as his was much in demand and exceedingly popular as a bass vocalist. His fine dramatic renderings of such songs as “The diver”, “True till death”, “The trumpeter”, and “Off to Philadelphia” will always be pleasantly remembered by those who heard them. He was a member of the Parish Church choir for some years and later of the St. Paul’s (Barton) choir. A native of the borough, in his younger days he gained a local reputation as a swimmer. He served in the Newport Companies of the I.W. Rifles, being for a long period the pioneer sergeant of the battalion, a position in which he enjoyed great popularity, particularly during the annual camps. He was also a member of the Earl Yarborough Lodge of Oddfellows and formerly of the Conservative Club. Mr. Osborne, who was 68, had been in failing health for some years, suffering with his heart, and death came to him suddenly in his bed-room just after he had risen on Saturday morning. He lost his only son, who died as a prisoner of war in Asia Minor after being captured in Kut with the 5th Hants Howitzer Battery, and a daughter died seven years ago. He leaves a widow, and one surviving daughter, with whom sincere sympathy is felt.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, the first part of the service being at St. Paul’s Church. The Rev. M. Atkinson (vicar) officiated, and the choir led the singing of the hymns “Fight the good fight” and “Abide with me”, and the chanting of the 90th Psalm. Mr. L. E. Dore (organist) played “Blest are the departed” (Spohr) and “O rest in the Lord” (Mendelssohn) as the cortege entered, and Chopin’s “Marche funebre” at the close while the congregation remained standing.

The chief mourners were Miss Osborne (daughter), Mrs. Kingswell, Mrs. Dacombe, and Mrs. Mayers (sisters), Mr. H. Morris, Mr. A. Kingswell, Mr. W. Dacombe, and Mr. H. Mayers (brothers-in-law), Mr. H. Cooke (cousin), and Mrs. S. Mayers, of Southampton (niece). Those also present at the church included Major and Mrs. H. J. Way, Miss Atkinson, Mrs. Bishop, Mrs. Sheath, Mrs. Brading, Mrs. Hancock, and Mrs. C. Sprake, Miss D. Burnard (town clerk’s department) and Mr. P. E. Shields (borough accountant) representing the Mayor and Corporation, Mr. C. V. Cheverton (secretary), and Mr. G. H. Dunford (member of the Management Committee) representing the Earl Yarborough Lodge of Oddfellows, and Mr. C. Eldridge (trustee) representing the local Foresters.

The interment was at the Newport Cemetery, the many floral tributes including wreaths from the St. Paul’s Church choir, and neighbours and friends of Pyle-street.