

Manx Notes 631 (2023)

“THE DEATH OF MR THOMAS COSTAIN” (1944)

The death of Mr Thomas Costain, builder, of “Maycroft,” Port Erin, took place suddenly last Friday evening. He was in his 85th year and was born at Colby, a son of the late James and Jane Costain. Subsequently his parents moved to Kentraugh and Croit-e-Caley, where his early manhood was spent. He was the last surviving trustee and former class-leader of Ebenezer (Croit-e-Caley) Methodist Chapel, the foundation stone of which was laid on Good Friday 1881.

It is interesting to recall that in the course of building most of the labour was supplied voluntarily, and in this Mr Costain took a very energetic part.

In the early days of the Chapel, the musical arrangements were under his supervision, and he had a special gift for “raising the tunes.”

He took up residence in Port Erin 43 years ago, where he carried on a successful business as master builder. Responsible for the fulfilment of many important contracts in various parts of the Island, Mr Costain erected the Port St Mary Railway Station premises, and the Port Erin and Port St Mary Gas Works, and supervised the Colby drainage scheme and the construction of the Port Erin Promenade between Strand Road and Bay Hotel.

A member of Port Erin Commissioners from 1906–09 and from 1913–29, he was chairman of the Board in 1915, and was also for many years the Board’s representative on the Executive of the Municipal Association, of which he was ex-President.

For many years he was a member of Port Erin Lifeboat Committee, and a voluntary collector for Noble’s Hospital. A keen bowler, Mr Costain was captain of the Port St Mary Club in 1929. He was devotedly identified with Station Road Methodist Church, Port Erin, of which he was a trustee, class-leader and ex-steward. A lifelong Rechabite, he was Past Chief Ruler and No. 2 on the books of Mona Rushen Tent.

At the meeting of Port Erin Commissioners Wednesday, Mr James R. Corrin, M.L.C.. J.P., (chairman), made sympathetic reference to the death of Mr Costain, who, he said, was one of the oldest citizens and who had served for many years on the Commissioners, of which he was an ex-chairman.

The members stood for a moment in silent remembrance.

The funeral took place on Tuesday. The Rev. E. Stanley Thomas (priest-in-charge of Rushen) and the Rev. Harry Williams (Methodist) officiated.

“[Rushen] Death of Mr Thomas Costain.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 12 May 1944: 8d.

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