

Manx Notes 695 (2024)

MR JOSEPH WOOLCOCK *

(1883)

(1)

On Thursday afternoon last, the funeral of Mr Joseph Woolcock, who died on Monday last, took place at Kirk Lonan. The funeral left his residence in the Glen a little after three o'clock, headed by the Laxey Amateur Band (of which the deceased was formerly a member) playing the "Dead March" in Saul. The coffin was covered with several beautiful wreaths, and his uniform cap was placed in the centre of one of them. A detachment of the Hallelujah Band and a great many Oddfellows followed their deceased friend and brother to his last home. It is said that this is the most numerous attended funeral that has taken place in Laxey for over a period of ten years.

"[Laxey] On Thursday afternoon" *Isle of Man Times* 9 June 1883: 5f.

(2)

Some eighteen months ago, when the Laxey Band were performing in Ramsey, one of their number named Woolcock, residing in Laxey Glen, unfortunately got into the harbour during the darkness of the night, and the "cold" which he then took terminated in his death from consumption on Monday last. On Thursday evening his remains had an imposing burial in our parish churchyard, the Laxey Band attending in uniform and played mournful strains suited to the occasion, and a numerous concourse of neighbours following.

"[Laxey] Funeral of a Bandsman." *Manx Sun* 9 June 1883: 4e.

Quite how John Joseph Woolcock ended up in the drink at Ramsey is not made clear, nor whether drink itself was to blame; however, end up he did and that was to lead to his demise aged just twenty-three. Woolcock was enumerated in the 1881 census as a blacksmith, unmarried and living with his brother and parents at 79 Glen Road in Laxey.¹ The Laxey Amateur Band were in attendance, a reminder of the music making opportunities open to males in the Island in this period.

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¹ *Census Enumerators' Book* for Laxey 1881, TNA, RG 11/5601, fol. 70, sch. 137. For the obituary notices, see "[Births, Marriages, and Deaths] Deaths," *Isle of Man Times* 16 June 1883: 5g, "[Births, Marriages, and Deaths] Deaths," *Mona's Herald* 20 June 1883: 5f.