

Celebrating 175 years of Manchester Unity in New Zealand

Brother Charles Kearns...

Brother Charles Kearns (one of the original nine) was born in Dublin on 9th December 1817. A bricklayer by trade, he was initiated into the Prince of Waterloo Lodge, Hyde District, England on 28th June 1834. On 6th April 1874 he was presented with a "Service of Plate" at a function in Wakefield, Nelson.

Brother Kearns replied, "Mr Chairman, Ladies, Gentlemen and Brothers, I rise with the utmost pleasure to acknowledge the high compliment and distinction you have thought proper to confer upon me. In offering my heartfelt thanks for this very handsome present, I assure you candidly that I consider myself unworthy of the respect thus shown me.

I consider it the duty of every man, particularly the man who earns his bread by the labour of his hands, to provide while in health for times of sickness and death, for come they will sooner or later, and also to make some provision for the widow and orphans he may leave behind.

It is to be regretted that there are no more of the original nine in the Province but myself. But as we are all mortal, that is a matter over which

we have no control. My position in the District reminds me of those beautiful words of the poet:-

"When I remember all those Brothers link'd together

I have seen around me fall like leaves in wintery weather

I seem like one who treads alone

Some banquet hall deserted. Whose lights are fled
Whose garlands dead, and all but he departed."

At a District Committee meeting on 21st July 1885 the Provincial Grand Master, Brother H V Gully reported that Brother C P Kearns had been seriously ill and that his illness had "terminated fatally" on the morning of 2nd February 1885. He was 67.

Brother Kearns is buried in the Anglican cemetery in Brightwater. A large obelisk was erected over his grave at a cost of 25 pounds.

To be continued...

**Excerpts from the Booklet "Trials and Triumphs" -
1842 to 2017**

Interested in finding out more, contact Jan Simpson on 03 547 9806 or email jans@manchesterunity.org.nz