

Celebrating 175 years of Manchester Unity in New Zealand

Brother George Greathead

Having helped to get Nelson Lodge established Brother Greathead, a blacksmith, moved to Australia with his wife and two young sons.

He returned to visit the Lodge in 1882 and was accorded a vote of thanks and the Honours of the Order as a mark of respect. He moved back to New Zealand, and settled in Greytown, in the Wairarapa.

In 1883 he had an article printed in the Wairarapa Standard and the following is an excerpt from that article..

"They wished me God speed at Leeds, drank my health, and gave me 15/- (\$1.50) to help me on my way. The members in Liverpool gave me 18/- (\$1.80) and a copy of the New General Law Book.

We found that there were nine Odd Fellows on the Martha Ridgeway, all of us "good on the books.

Our place of meeting was the top of the long-boat. The Doctor told my wife he thought I was a ring-leader among the Chartists, and if this were true I would be the first man to be hanged in New Zealand.

With feelings of joy and wonder we finally sighted land and after eight days of

battling strong winds we arrived at Port Nicholson (Wellington.)

Where Manners Street is now there was a grog shop kept by old Bobby Jenkins. (No relation to P.G.M. Brother Richard Jenkins.)

Our final destination, however, was Nelson, to which we ultimately sailed. With the New Law Book in hand I felt a certain responsibility. We met amongst the fern. It was cold, but our hearts were warm."

Brother Greathead died of fright at his son's home in Carterton on 17th September 1885, aged 72. An inquest followed and the verdict was that George had accidentally swallowed the liniment he used for his arthritis, instead of his toddy of rum.

The liniment would not have killed him, but the fright did.

He is buried in the Greytown Cemetery with his wife Dorothy.

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