

## Wiltshire Friendly Society

Semley Branch 1836 - 1879



- 1836 On Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, the parish of Semley presented a very gay and pleasing appearance, the members of the Union Benefit Society proceeding in procession to their esteemed Minister's house, and from thence to the church, where an excellent, and very appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev R Ord, after which they proceeded to their usual place of meeting, and partook of an excellent dinner provided for the occasion. Nothing could exceed the harmony and conviviality which prevailed throughout the day, and the evening was spent in a very pleasant manner.

Salisbury & Winchester Journal June 06 1836

- 1838 The ninth anniversary of the Semley Union Society was celebrated on Whit Wednesday with unusual spirit and discourse was delivered by the respected Rector. They afterwards partook of an excellent dinner, provided for the occasion. We congratulate this excellent Institution on the accession of a number of honorary members.

Salisbury & Winchester Journal June 18 1838

- 1858 On Whit Wednesday the members of the Semley Union Society met at their club room and, headed by a brass band, marched in procession to the parish church, when a most suitable and impressive sermon was preached by the Rev H Hall, from proverbs xxii. 3, "a prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished". At the conclusion of the sermon the members returned to their club room, where an excellent dinner was served up in the best style. After the cloth was removed, the health of the respected minister of the parish and others were drunk, and then the merry dance and songs were kept up without interruption till the shades of the evening bade the company depart to their respective homes.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal June 05 1858

- 1873 Whit-Wednesday is always a gay day in this parish, and this year was not a whit behind former years in this respect. The members of the above named society assembled to celebrate their anniversary at 10 o'clock, at the Benett Arms, and, having formed into procession, each member decorated with flowing ribbons, and headed by the Hindon Brass Band, they proceeded to the church where an excellent and appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev E Hutchinson of Tisbury. After service, they perambulated the village, returning to the Benett Arms where a sumptuous repast was provided, to which ample justice was done. The chair was ably filled by Mr Wm Pike, supported by Dr Wilkinson and Mr J Pike. There were also present Messrs T and A Bracher, J Brown, E Lawes, C Wiles, T Baker, S Scammell, S Bracher, R Morgan, F Pike, H Pike, J Warren &c.

After the removal of the cloth, the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given and drank with enthusiasm. Next came "Army, Navy, Yeomanry and Volunteers", responded to by Mr Robert Morgan of the Wiltshire Yeomanry. "The Bishop and Clergy" was next given, but as no clergyman was present, there was no response. The health of the Dowager Marchioness of Westminster and Lady Theodora Grosvenor were next drunk, to which Mr John Brown responded. "The Health of the Visitors coupled with the names of Mr S Bracher, and the Surgeon of the Club, Dr Wilkinson" followed, and was responded to by the gentlemen named.

The "Health of the Secretary" was given to which Mr W Pike responded, giving an outline of the Society's affairs from which we gather it numbers 72 members and has a balance in hand of £55. During the past year, £16 9s 6d was spent in sick pay. In the afternoon, the procession reformed and proceeded to the Rectory, when the members and friends engaged in dancing and other games, but the rain marred and cut short the enjoyment of the lovers of this sport.

Western Gazette Friday 13 June 1873

- 1879 Our usually quiet village was all astir on Whit Wednesday, it being the occasion of the anniversary of the Semley Friendly Society. At an early hour, the splendid new peal of bells rung forth merry sounds, and the members of the Club mustered in full force. Having formed into procession, headed by the Stour Brass Band, they perambulated the village, returning to the church, where Divine service was held. The Rector, the Rev L K Hilton, preached an earnest and practical sermon from Amos iii. 3.

After service the members repaired to the club-room, which was nicely decorated for the occasion, where a capital dinner was provided by Host Merchant. At the head of the table, among others, were Mr W Pike (President), The Rev L K Hilton, Messrs T Bracher, T Baker, F Pike, J Pike, J Brown, H Pike and E Lawes.

After the removal of the cloth, the usual loyal toasts were given, that of "The Bishop, Clergy and Ministers of other Denominations" being ably responded to by the Rector, whose address was expressive of the kindest feeling, of which he afterwards gave practical proof in providing tea for the members, their wives, &c. in his own drawing-room, which kindness was highly appreciated. The day was moderately fine. Towards evening, a large party assembled, and engaged in various amusements. We gather that the Club numbers 70 members and is in a flourishing condition.

Western Gazette June 06 1879