

# ***A Century In Freemasonry***



BY  
W. G. SEERS



**The History of the Mackenzie  
Lodge No. 15 V.C. Newstead**

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**COMPILED FROM THE LODGE RECORDS  
BY W. G. SEERS, P.M.**

Published 1962

# The History of the Mackenzie Lodge No. 15 V.C. Newstead

In 1957 the story of one hundred years of unbroken Masonic activities was commemorated in the Newstead and Maldon areas of North Central Victoria, when members of the Mackenzie Lodge met to take part in their centenary celebration. It was a notable gathering. Thoughts turned back inevitably to the occasion when the Lodge was formed in the then busy gold mining town of Maldon; and to the installation of the first Worshipful Master, Wor. Bro. Dr. C. H. Hardy, on December 11, 1857. The 101st Wor. Master installed in 1957 was Wor. Bro. Spencer Lyall James Stewart.

Among the many pioneers and brethren who, in those early days, gave such vigorous service to the support and nourishment of Freemasonry, and the building of solid foundations for its progress, none was better remembered than Wor. Bro. R. C. Mackenzie. For it was after him that the Lodge was named; and it was with his permission that the first two meetings were held in the Maldon Court House.

There were other good reasons for special regard for the memory of Robert Cleghorn Mackenzie. His life loomed large in the early history of Maldon. Son of an Edinburgh doctor, he arrived in Adelaide in 1849 to seek fortune as a squatter. But he was attracted before long to Victoria — and to Maldon — when the exciting gold discoveries drew so many to the new fields. And, in due course, Mackenzie became a Goldfields Commissioner, serving at Bendigo, Castlemaine and Blackwood. In 1856 he was transferred to Maldon as Warden and Police Magistrate, at the early age of 27. Very soon he made his mark as an energetic, public-minded citizen; among other things he played a big part in the establishment of the Maldon Hospital, and in its administration; in masonic affairs; and in sporting activities.

He was, indeed, a civic leader who gave much fine service to the people of the district. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Mackenzie Lodge bore his name. And in 1957 when Bro. Stewart was installed to begin the second century of the Lodge's history, tributes were paid to Mackenzie's memory and to his services to freemasonry.

Freemasonry was established in Bendigo in 1854; and R. C. Mackenzie was the first Master of the Golden Lodge. He later became Provincial Grand Master under the English constitution to which Mackenzie Lodge first took allegiance.

It was as first Master that he became the prime mover in the formation of the Lodge at Maldon which was to bear his name. Maldon had sprung up, like all such gold-fields towns, as a mushroom growth of tents and huts. But already it was beginning to develop into a place of more solid and permanent buildings. The sturdy and picturesque population of miners — many of them Chinese — numbered about 5,000; and it was growing. So there was ample scope for the extension of masonic activities to the town. In this Mackenzie took a prominent part. Late in 1858, as acting Provincial Grand Master, it was he who consecrated the newly formed Southern Cross Lodge.

### First Meeting

The story of Mackenzie Lodge during its first hundred years can be traced through the minute books and records, which have been faithfully preserved. The earliest date found in the minutes is December 8, 1857; and this entry refers to a meeting which was held to settle details of the first meeting of the Lodge, which was to take place in the Court House, Maldon, on December 11.

The meeting opened at 1.30 p.m. and after the preliminary proceedings, R. C. Mackenzie, who was in the chair, presented the gavel to Wor. Bro. Joseph Ball, Worshipful Master of the Mt. Alexander Lodge. The latter, with the assistance of Bro. Hugh Barklay SW; R. C. Mackenzie SW; J. Brown, Tyler; and twelve other brethren, then conducted the ceremony of initiating five candidates. After this, the Lodge was opened in the second and third degrees, in due form. Bro. Ball announced that he would proceed with the installation of the Worshipful Master Elect. The Lodge was then opened in the P.M.'s degree, and Bro C. H. Hardy — a medical man — was duly installed, Bro. Ball being assisted by the Past Masters Mackenzie, W. Davidson and T. Staggs. The following brethren were invested with the badges of their respective offices: Bro. Donald Martin SW; Thomas Peart J.W.; Dennis Kenny SD; James Lyon JD; Chas. Semler, treasurer and secretary; James Cross IG; and Thomas Staggs, tiler. A Board of General Purposes was formed; and the minutes mention that Bro. J. Brown, tiler, was awarded two guineas for his service to the Lodge — after which the Lodge closed down in peace and harmony.

A ball — the cost of which was £50 — wound up the proceedings; and doubtless it was a merry occasion in the gold-rush town, and a cheerful beginning of the Lodge's first hundred years.

Only two meetings were held in the Maldon Court

House, which saw the birth of the Lodge. After that, the brethren met in Bro. McIntosh's new saloon hall — the British and American Hotel, situated in the Main Street where Langslow's Buildings stand today.

In November 1853, as mentioned above, the Southern Cross Lodge was consecrated in Maldon by Rt. Wor. Bro. Mackenzie, acting Provincial Grand Master; and Thomas Staggs was installed as first Master. The two Lodges — Mackenzie and Southern Cross — collaborated in a ball in December of that year to celebrate the festival of St. John. The Southern Cross Lodge is still in existence in Maldon, and has also attained its centenary.

For some years the Mackenzie Lodge continued to flourish. But the minute books record that on November 14, 1861, a motion was carried to the effect that the brethren of the Lodge should resign and join the Southern Cross Lodge; and that the Warrant be entrusted to the Worshipful Master Thomas Evans for twelve months, and then surrendered. The Mackenzie brethren were to pay a fee of one guinea for joining the Southern Cross Lodge. Actually the regular fees at the time were two guineas for joining, and eight guineas for initiation. The records also state that the Mackenzie Lodge furniture was to be given to the Southern Cross Lodge.

### Transfer to Vaughan

But it appears that the Warrant was not, after all, surrendered. There are no available records of any kind covering the period from December 1861 to December 4, 1862. Then, however, the minutes begin again, with a record of the first meeting of the Mackenzie Lodge held at Vaughan on that date — Vaughan being a small centre on the goldfields not far from Castlemaine.

At this meeting Thomas Evans was still in the chair; and the Lodge was now called the Mackenzie Lodge, Vaughan; the meeting place was at a spot somewhere between Vaughan and Fryerstown. The Number of the Mackenzie Lodge in Maldon had been 1047. But this was changed in September 1863 to 745 while the Lodge was situated at Vaughan.

Once more Mackenzie Lodge, in its new home, flourished for a while, for the goldfields were still productive and well populated. Many of the members during this period were Chinese, who had flocked in large numbers to the diggings and mines in the Castlemaine and Maldon districts. (It was, indeed, a Chinese interpreter, L. W.

Wright, who was the first Master installed at Vaughan.)

But it would seem that about this time the Ballarat fields were beginning to offer more attraction to a number of the Lodge brethren. Many must have left the Vaughan area to seek gold, and their fortunes, elsewhere. For, in 1866, the Lodge almost collapsed. It carried on, with much reduced numbers, until 1870.

During these bad years the secretary, Bro. W. M. Mackenzie, continued to keep the records. But on the date of each meeting the terse entry "No quorum" in the minute books tells its own tale.

Then, on Friday, November 4, 1871, there comes the record of a meeting which was held in the Strathloddon Lodge room in Guildford. Wor. Bro. Middleton was in the chair, and the records mention five others — Bros. Beard, W. Dolphin, J. Smith, E. Lancaster and G. W. Poulson. Bro. Dolphin proposed and Bro. Beard seconded a motion to the effect that the Mackenzie Lodge No. 745 should be removed to Newstead, and that application should be made to the Rt. Wor. District Grand Master for a Dispensation.

This important motion was carried unanimously. Carried, too, were motions to the effect that Grand Lodge dues should be paid, and that Bro. W. M. Mackenzie, secretary, should be asked to hand over the books to Bro. Middleton. It was further resolved that the furniture be purchased from the Strathloddon Lodge which had, at that time, almost ceased to function although even as late as 1883 it continued to receive mention in the Mackenzie Lodge minutes.

### **First Newstead Meeting**

In May 1871, some seven months after the meeting in Guildford, the first regular meeting of the Mackenzie Lodge in its new home was held at the Mechancis' Institute in Newstead. Bro. Garsed, a member of the Golden Lodge and W.M. of the Zenith Lodge, duly consecrated the room for Masonic purposes. He was assisted by Bro. Bond SW No. 692 who read the exordium, and by Bro. Dolphin in the ceremony of distributing the wine, oil and salt.

The Lodge opened in the first degree at 4 p.m. and again five candidates were initiated — W. H. Mulholland, C. Elliott, Chas. Slee, Edgar Slee and Geo. Brittingham. Later the Lodge was opened in the second and third degrees, and Bro. William Dolphin was installed as Worshipful Master. Brethren were then installed and in-

vested — Bros. J. C. House SW; Tronson JW; Sutherland, treasurer; Jobson, secretary; Webb SD; Lawrence JD; Davis IG; Brown, tyler. Masonic regalia was worn that evening at a ball in honor of the occasion.

From that date onward through the years installations have been regularly held in May. In February 1941 regular meeting nights were changed to the first Saturday in each month.

When the United Grand Lodge of Victoria was constituted on March 21, 1889, the Mackenzie Lodge became No. 15 in the Register. Bro. J. C. House was appointed J.G.W. in the first Grand Lodge. The present Warrant was mounted and the number added on November 6, 1889.

### Present Lodge Room Purchased

Until February 27, 1907 the Mackenzie Lodge held its meetings in the Mechanics Hall at Newstead. In 1906 it had been felt that to provide a new building suitable for Lodge purposes at a cost — in those days — of £300 would be too much for the Lodge finances. Instead it was decided to buy the Primitive Methodist Church building — the present Lodge room. This was duly done; and the first meeting was held there on February 27, 1907

The Mackenzie Lodge is fortunate in that the Warrant was never surrendered; and it can be truly said that it has never been sullied during the hundred years and more of the Lodge's existence — a proud record. Its founders — many from the Mother Country — well sowed the seed of their Masonic faith in their new country. And between Bro. Hardy and Bro. Stewart in 1957 a hundred years of Masonic tradition was well carried on by a line of past masters through times that were sometimes difficult and sometimes prosperous.

Among the hundreds of entries in the minutes books the historian of today can pick out a variety of highlights of the past story, typical of the quiet flow of life in the Lodge. From the beginning benevolence and charity were practised by the brethren, and there are many entries to show how appeals, both local and for other lodges, were liberally supported. Some other, typical highlights are as follows:

- 1885—the first organ was bought in October at a cost of £15. This was damaged in 1889 in a flood which inundated Newstead.
- 1907—secretary's table bought for 22/6.
- 1908—complete set of Working Tools was presented to the Lodge by St. George Lodge, Daylesford.

- 1909—lodge room flooded in September. Just before 1910 the Lodge was at a low ebb. No organ—no refreshments!
- 1910—Bro. Dr. Hill presented an organ.
- 1913—Bro. Dr. Hill presented the baton.
- 1919—Rt. W. Bro. Bolton closed Lodge in long form (first mention).
- 1920—Lodge books sent to Grand Lodge for safe custody.
- 1920—H.R.H. the Prince of Wales at Grand Lodge.
- 1921—Mt. Franklin Lodge of Hiram presented the Perfect Ashler.
- 1927—Bro Hawkey presented the box for collars, aprons etc.
- 1938—electric light installed in Lodge room.
- 1940—new carpet presented by metropolitan brethren who had recently visited the Lodge.
- 1942—Bro. C. Rankin presented a gavel made from material obtained in Palestine during active service.

Records of special service to the Lodge include the period of thirty years of work as secretary by Bro. Geo. Jenkins; and many years of service as treasurer by Bro. R. C. McIlwrick. The present secretary Bro. A. M. Hurse, has held that office since 1940.

Brethren who have been honored by Grand Lodge are:  
Rt. Wor. Bro. Mackenzie, acting Provincial Grand Master, 1858.

J. C. House JGW in First Grand Lodge, Victoria, afterwards PGSW 1893.

Dr. Eccles PJGD 1905.

Geo. Jenkins PJGD 1913.

Dr. Hill PGSD 1913.

Chas. Atkin PJGD 1921.

Geo. Swanson PJGD.

H. Ashburn G.St. 1942.

H. W. Robinson P.G.St.B. 1954.

A. M. Hurse PJGD 1957.

Also at the time of writing Wor. Bro. James C. Armstrong has been appointed P.G. Sw. B.

Going back to the birth of the Mackenzie Lodge one finds that the foundation members made up a very good cross section of the community of those days. They included medical men, a magistrate, miners, publicans, car-

penters, wheelwrights, bank agents, chemist, draper,

musician, engineers, battery manager, town clerk, clerk, man and so on. The roll of the foundation members in the year 1857-58 has been preserved. It is as follows: Wor. Bro. C. H. Hardy WM; R. Mackenzie IPM; W. Davidson PM; D. Martin SW; T. Peart JW; D. Kenny SD; J. Lyon JD; J. W. Cross IG; T. Staggs, tyler; C. L. Semler,



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secretary and treasurer; Eros. H. Napier; J. Anderson; P. Ducat; J. Mackintosh; J. B. Jones; R. Lawrence; E. James; A. Honnens; W. Kirk; T. Evans; Rev. J. Cheyne; J. Whitlain; J. Wood, J. Wright; R. Tobin; M. Tayler; C. Evans; J. Yates; D. O. Preshaw; R. C. Parker; J. Rodgers; B. Pichford; T. Tobin; E. Ellis; A. Aldridge; F. Maddocks; E. Bentley; J. Skelton; C. Edwards; G. Bretherton; R. Hawks; J. C. Williams; W. T. Miller; W. Bailey; J. Anderson; G. Weichmann; G. Eichardt; D. C. MacGauhey; M. J. Goldsmid.

The Lodge they built, now over one hundred years ago, lives on. Summarised, the following are the significant dates in its history:

Mackenzie Lodge No. 1047, Maldon, December 8, 1857-August 15, 1861.

Mackenzie Lodge, Vaughan, December 4, 1862-July 6, 1865.

Mackenzie Lodge, Newstead, No. 745, May 31, 1871. Changed to No. 15, November 6, 1889.

### BYE-LAWS OF THE MACKENZIE LODGE, VAUGHAN.

#### No. 1047.

#### MEETINGS

1. That this Lodge shall meet on the Thursday next before the full moon in every month, at half-past seven o'clock, p.m.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

2. That the W. Master, Treasurer, and Tyler, shall be elected annually at the regular monthly meeting in December; and the W. Master shall be duly and solemnly installed immediately after the confirmation of the minutes at the regular monthly meeting in January, and he shall then appoint his officers, and invest them and the elective Officers.

#### VOTING.

3. That no member shall be qualified to speak or vote upon any question who shall be in arrears exceeding 6 months.

#### FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS.

4. That the following shall be the fees and dues payable by every member of this Lodge, viz. :—

On Initiation, including a book of "Constitutions", registration fees, and Grand Lodge Certificate .. . . .	5	5	0
On joining from Eng. Constitution .. . . .	1	1	0
„ „ from any other Constitution .. . . .	1	6	0
For each Degree conferred upon members made in any other Lodge .. . . .	1	1	0
Monthly subscriptions for resident members .. . . .	0	3	6

Annual subscriptions (in advance) for country members residing more than four miles distant, and not attending more than four times in each year .. 0 10 6

#### ARREARS.

5. That no returns shall be made to Grand Lodge of any Brother who shall be in arrears, or owe a sum equal to six months subscriptions; and in all cases where a satisfactory explanation shall not be given to the Lodge, any Brother who shall be more than such period in arrears, shall, after he has been twice summoned to pay the same and shall refuse or neglect so to do, be deemed to have resigned his membership, and shall cease to be retained on the books of the Lodge. The expulsion clause of this rule shall not apply to sea-faring or Brethren absent from the Colony who shall, previous to their departure, signify the same in writing to the Lodge, when their names shall be retained on the books for such further period as the Lodge may decide.

#### PROPOSITION OF MEMBERS.

6. Any Brother proposing a gentleman for initiation, shall deposit with the Secretary, the sum of £1 1s., to be allowed out of the initiation fee; but the said amount shall be absolutely forfeited unless the gentleman so proposed shall attend for initiation within three months after election, unless satisfactory cause be shown to the contrary. Any Brother proposing a joining member shall deposit one-half the joining fee, but in all cases the amount deposited shall be returned should the candidate be rejected.

#### LODGES OF EMERGENCY.

7. That any Brother or Brothers wishing for a Lodge of Emergency shall deposit the sum of £2 2s., to defray the expenses of the same, and this charge shall only be returned to the Brother or Brothers when the W.M. and his Wardens, or four-fifths of the members present at the next regular monthly meeting shall issue an order to that effect.

#### AUDIT COMMITTEE.

8. That an annual audit of accounts shall take place at the earliest opportunity after the meeting in December, by a committee consisting of the W.M., S. W., J. W., and Secretary, assisted by two members (being M. M.'s, of twelve months' standing) elected by the Lodge for that purpose, and the report shall be brought up at the next monthly meeting of the Lodge, and shall be put for confirmation immediately after the newly installed Master shall have appointed his officers.

#### DUES TO OFFICERS.

9. That the Secretary and Tyler shall receive such sum as the Lodge may from time to time determine for their

services; and shall be exempt from payment of any dues to the Lodge.

#### BOARD OF GENERAL PURPOSES.

10. That a Board of General Purposes, consisting of all P. Ms., members of this Lodge, the W. M., S. W., J. W., and Treasurer, shall have the entire superintendence of all matters connected with this Lodge not otherwise provided for in these Bye-Laws, to whom all matters of complaint or dispute shall be referred, and whose decision shall be final, except notice of appeal be given in writing within three days from the delivery of such decision, when the matter shall be referred to the whole Lodge. The Secretary shall attend all such meetings in his official capacity, but shall have no vote, (unless a P.M.) nor shall any member speak or vote as one of the Board in any case wherein he is individually concerned. The complainant or defendant has the power to ask the Lodge to appoint two members of the Lodge (being M. Ms., of twelve months' standing) to assist them in their deliberations, who shall only be at liberty to attend, speak, and vote upon the special occasion for which they are elected, and shall cease to be members of such Board as soon as a decision (which in this case shall be final) shall have been arrived at on the subject.

#### PAYMENTS.

11. That the W. M. shall have the power in cases of emergency, to order payment of any sum not exceeding £2., but any larger amount shall be referred to the Board of General Purposes, or the Lodge.

#### ALTERATION OF THESE BYE-LAWS

12. That any Brother wishing to make an alteration in these Bye-Laws, shall give notice in writing to the Board of General Purposes, who shall, if they deem the matter of sufficient importance, cause a notice thereof to be inserted in the summonses for and be discussed at the following regular meeting of the Lodge .

Vaughan, January, 1863.

The annexed Bye-Laws were confirmed at a meeting of all the members of the Mackenzie Lodge.

J. W. WRIGHT, W.M.  
GEO. G. HALLEY, S.W.  
JOHN WILLIAMS, J.W.

GEO. WM. TROTTER, Sec.

I have perused and approved of the foregoing Bye-Laws for the good government of the Mackenzie Lodge.

FREDK. C. STANDISH, P.G.M.

T. H. LEMPRIERE, P.G. Sec.

## Interesting Relics

Interesting relics of a century of Freemasonry are the programme of a Masonic Ball, held by the Lodge in the ballroom of the Royal Hotel, Maldon, on Thursday, June 24, 1858, and a copy of the Byelaws of the Lodge when it met at Vaughan in 1863.

The Lodge is indebted to Wor. Bro. A. E. Edhouse, P.J.G.D., Asst. Inspector of Workings, secretary of the Southern Cross Lodge, Maldon, for the gift of these interesting souvenirs.

A menu card and toast list printed for the installation of Bro. H. Colquhoun as W.M. in 1894, was given to the writer by the late Wor. Bro. H. T. Slee, master of the Lodge in 1934.

A photographic copy of this card and programme is printed below.

### PROGRAMME

### OF DANCES

QUADRILLE  
POLKA  
Valse DEUXTEMPS  
SCHOTTISCHE  
LANCERS  
GALOP  
WALTZ  
VARSOVIANA  
SCHOTTISCHE  
REEL  
QUADRILLE  
POLKA  
GALOP  
QUADRILLE  
WALTZ  
SCHOTTISCHE  
LANCERS  
POLKA  
Valse DEUXTEMPS  
VARSOVIANA  
SCHOTTISCHE  
GALOP  
QUADRILLE  
REEL  
POLKA  
COUNTRY DANCE

MASONIC  
BALL,  
MACKENZIE LODGE,  
MALDON.  
Festival of St. John,  
LODGE ROOM,  
ROYAL HOTEL,  
Thursday, June 24, 1858.  
STEWARDS:  
Mr. C. H. Hardy  
Mr. R. C. Mackenzie  
Mr. J. Anderson  
Mr. C. L. Semler  
Mr T. Evans Mr J. Wood  
Mr. F. Maddocks  
Mr J. Yates Mr T. Tobin

TARRANGOWER: PRINTED AT THE 'TIMES' OFFICE.



## MACKENZIE LODGE

Installation of  
**BROTHER H. COLQUHOUN**  
On Wednesday, May 15th, 1894

### PROGRAMME OF TOASTS

"Queen and Craft" — "Three Grand Masters"  
THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER  
National Anthem

"The W.M., the Grand Master of Victoria"  
BRO. HOUSE  
Fine Old English Gentleman

"The Officers of the Grand Lodge of Victoria"  
BRO. SLEE  
Song

"The Worshipful Master"  
BRO. RYAN  
Song

"The Retiring Master"  
BRO. COLQUHOUN  
Song

"The Installing Masters"  
BRO. PRIDEAUX  
Music

"The Newly Invested Officers"  
BRO. MCKAY  
Music

"Sister Lodges and Visiting Brethren"  
BRO. HAMILTON  
Music

"All Poor and Distressed Masons"  
BRO. KAVANAGH  
Music

Bro. Prideaux, Maldon

## MASTERS 1857-1962.

1857 C. H. Hardy	1910 Dr. A. M. Hill
1858 T. Peard	1911 F. Holloway
1859 J. Anderson	1912 E. G. Jenkins
1860 T. Evans	1913 B. Blinkhorn
1861 T. Evans	1914 F. G. Hawkey
1862 Inst. chgd. Jan. '63	1915 R. C. McIlwrick
1863 L. W. Wright	1916 T. Straughan
1864 J. Williams	1917 C. Delmenico
1865 J. S. MacKenzie	1918 H. F. Ashburn
1866 J. P. Middleton	1919 H. Morell
1866)	1920 E. G. Williams
to ) No mtgs. recorded	1921 J. F. Catron
1871)	1922 W. R. Lomas
1871 W. Dolphin	1923 W. J. Mein
1872 J. C. House	1924 A. J. Parry
1873 E. Trønson	1925 Griff Jenkins
1874 C. Slee	1926 W. J. Munro
1875 C. Harris	1927 M. V. Delmenico
1876 E. Slee	1928 W. H. Davies
1877 E. Slee	1929 A. Gervasoni
1878 C. Slee	1930 H. S. Rintoul
1879 C. Slee	1931 T. W. Matthews
1880 J. Mackie	1932 S. G. McPhee
1881 T. F. Ryan	1933 C. Sartori
1882 T. F. Ryan	1935 A. Cumming
1883 W. S. McAlpine	1936 A. M. Hurse
1884 W. Kavanagh	1937 J. H. Austen
1885 J. C. House	1938 W. N. Cusack
1886 J. C. House	1939 G. A. Hurse
1887 T. F. Ryan	1940 H. W. Robinson
1888 G. McKay	1941 H. W. Evans
1889 H. Colquhoun	1942 F. T. Longmire
1890 H. Colquhoun	1943 R. Frankling
1891 J. Cassidy	1944 A. D. MacLaren
1892 J. Satchwell	1945 C. H. Rilen
1893 J. C. House	1946 S. Hauser
1894 H. Colquhoun	1947 R. S. Baxter
1895 A. Cameron	1948 W. G. Barkla
1896 G. McKay	1949 J. J. Dromey
1897 M. Cooper	1950 J. C. Armstrong
1898 W. Jenkins	1951 A. J. Hartup
1899 L. Pedler	1952 D. Redfearn
1900 J. W. Lascelles	1953 J. H. Butler
1901 Dr. J. H. Eccles	1954 W. G. Seers
1902 J. Evans	1955 A. J. Seers
1903 G. Wilson	1956 N. E. Stewart
1904 G. Swanson	1957 S. L. J. Stewart
1905 G. Swanson	1958 D. Hill
1906 G. Jenkins	1959 W. C. Butler
1907 F. F. Foers	1960 J. H. Bean
1908 C. Atkin	1961 W. M. Nicholls
1909 W. G. Willoughby	1962 M. Holden

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Newstead "Echo" Print.