

The Re-Formation of the TCA in 1904

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CORNISHMEN IN TORONTO An Association Formed – First Annual Dinner

A former resident of the Liskeard district, now settled in Toronto, Canada, sends me an account of the successful formation of a Cornish Association in that city, where a number of Westcountrymen have formed an organization “to keep alive and conserve the best interests of Cornishmen in Toronto and in Canada at large”. The first meeting, at which this desirable project was set on foot, was held on February 28th last in the office of Mr. R.A. Rogers, 49 Yonge Street Arcade, and it was then and there decided to make arrangements for the gathering of Cornishmen at a supper, and, if possible, to then form an Association. In the preliminary circular issued on the following day, this decision was announced and it was added: “The early associations of the dear old home and haunts in the land of Tre, Pol, and Pen should be kept fresh and green in the memory of every Cornishman who loves his native soil”.

In response, a very good number of Cornish folk enrolled themselves, and they met for the first annual banquet on the evening of May 8th at Williams’ Café, 179, Yonge Street, the large attendance of ladies and gentlemen bespeaking a prosperous future for the Association. One of the newspaper reports adds that “Native wit and the sociable spirit which is Nature’s gift to all the Celtic races, together with a good supply of edibles, made the banquet a huge success.” As a matter of fact, our correspondent states that about 150 were present, and the enjoyable proceedings, with speech and song and social intercourse, were kept up till a late hour. No intoxicants were supplied from beginning to end.

The menu was a compilation of special interest, enclosed in an artistic cover, printed in crimson on a fawn ground, with the Cornish arms in gold. On the first page appeared a poem by F. Gist (a member of the Association), entitled “One and All”, which is worth quoting:

Tis good to see a pasty, boys,
Like mother used to make,
And talk once more of long ago,
For dear old Cornwall’s sake.

And have some roasted taties,
As we did in days of yore;
Like them that grew at Hawker’s Cove,

Along Tintagel's shore.
We're in for a taste of pilchards, too;
What pleasures they recall,
Of stirring scenes at Carbis Bay,
In the land of One and All.

Ah, dear old land, we love thee still,
Long may thy tales be told
Each part to us appears almost
Like links of burnished gold.

We love thy rugged rock-bound shore,
Thy waves and flying foam,
And tides that sweep the yellow sand
When surging billows boom.

It binds our hearts to hearts at home,
And seems to draw us near,
The treasured haunts of childhood's joy,
And thrills our souls with cheer

The menu was composed by members of the Association and caused lots of amusement at table. The Cornish pasty and saffron cake were both in evidence. "but" (says our correspondent), "not like mother used to make them". The one thing missing seems to have been junket and cream, but no doubt that want will be supplied at the next annual dinner. The menu read as follows:

Broth.

Cream of Penzance Chicken

Fish.

Mevagissey Pilchards, St. Ives Sauce,
Launceston Taties

Joints.

Tregothnan Prime Roast Beef, Fowey Taties,
Trewithan Roast Turkey, Carn Brea Sauce,
Probus Taties.

Vegetables.
Wadebridge Green Peas, Stratton Leeks,
Marazion Broccoli.
Entremets
Figgey Pudding, Trelawny Sauce, Tatie Pasties.

Desserts.
Truro Ice Cream, Seedy Cake, Tywardreath Saffron Cake,
Crowan Quarantine Apples, Rashleigh Oranges, Bananas, Mt. Edgcumbe grapes,
Liskeard Figs, Dates, Shelled Almonds, Cornish Hedge Nuts, Bon-bons and
Chocolates, Cornish All-Sorts

Bodmin Cheese, Falmouth Celery, Hayle Biscays

Dolly Pentreath Tay
Sir Humphrey Davy Coffee
St. Austell Lemonade,
Cornish Cream

Liskeard was represented by Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Snell and daughter, and Mr. Chapman Symons; Dobwalls people present included Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Henwood and son, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ede and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Pill and daughter, together with Mr. Dick Hosking, of Broadoak, while Cornish people assembled who hailed from almost every point in the “first and last county”.

The toast-list opened with “Our King”, loyally honoured. “Canada” was proposed by Mr. W.J. Grey, and ably replied to by Mr. E.B. Osler, M.P., Honorary President of the Association. “Cornwall” was given by Mr. H. Balson and responded to by Mr. Jas. Hawken (Treasurer); “Our Association”, proposed by Capt. R. Fugler (president), and acknowledged by Mr. W.J. Tremear; and “Our Guests” and “The Ladies” were replied to by Rev. George Webber and Mr. F.K. Luke respectively. Songs and Cornish stories interspersed the speeches.

Officers of the Association, besides those named, are Messrs. R.A. Rogers and George W. Nicholls, vice-presidents; Jos. H. Champion, secretary; W. Prideaux, corresponding secretary; J. Thompson, sentinel. The Executive Committee comprises Messrs. J.W. Cheeseworth, chairman; R.H. Pill, secretary; J. Ede, F. Gist, H. Greet, H.R. Whetter, W.J. Snell, H. Balson, A.J. Saunders, A.J. Penberthy, W.G. James, and F. Henwood. A committee has been formed to arrange a picnic in the summer, which, it is expected, will be quite as successful as the dinner.