



## South and West Wilts Hunt

### Keepers' Dinner

The gamekeepers, earth-stoppers, and covert owners of the South and West Wilts Hunt were entertained on Wednesday, at the Seymour Arms, East Knoyle, by the Master (Mr. J. Bell). The afternoon was spent at the clay pigeon shooting and although the weather was hazy and visibility poor, some remarkably good shooting was witnessed by the large gathering present.

The principal competition was for a handsome silver championship cup, presented by the Master for competition by the gamekeepers. It was won by Mr. W. Buckett, of Vauxhall, Crockerton, in the employ of the Marquis of Bath, the following handicap being won by Mr. G. Poole. Mr. de Tuyll won a sweepstake, but was later beaten by Mr. Carlton Cross in a match. Two matches between the gentlemen and keepers were won by the keepers.

On the conclusion of the shooting competitions, the company, of about one hundred, adjourned to the hotel for dinner, where an excellent repast was served by Mr. Sanson. The Master presided and was supported by General W. A. M. Thompson, Mr. John Hastings, Mr. Carlton Cross, Mr. H. W. Reynard, Messrs. R. Stratton, R. E. Coles, T. Genge, M. Genge, T. Doggerell, G. Young, A. Jacob, C. Ricketts, R. Jesse and many other well-known farmers and landowners. After the loyal toast had been duly honoured, the rest of the evening was marked by a spirit of geniality and an absence of formality.

Welcoming his guests, the Master said he had greatly enjoyed himself that afternoon, but he also hoped those present would help him to enjoy himself during the coming winter by preserving foxes. A lot of foxes, 57 brace, had been killed last season which was rather above the average, but he had had some rather dreary days towards the close of the season.

In a competition for a prize presented by Mr. Mosselmans for the best rendering of a song not exceeding four verses by a keeper or earth-stopper, Messrs. W. Reakes, H. Poole, W. H. Marks and W. Barnard took part, Mr Barnard being adjudged the winner.

Mr. Carlton Cross, proposing the health of the Master, said that in Mr. Bell they had a sportsman who was second to none (loud applause). They had a very jolly evening and he felt sure that all present were very grateful to the Master for giving them such a good time (applause). The Master's health was then drunk with enthusiasm, and accorded musical honours.

Returning thanks, Mr. Bell, in a racy speech, said that he had been host that evening from a spirit of selfishness, he had thoroughly enjoyed himself in entertaining them (laughter and applause). After twenty-one years in the hunting field, he regarded the gamekeeper as one of the finest type of sportsmen in England and that record of service during the war had proved it (hear, hear). It had been a very great pleasure to entertain them and next season he hoped to inaugurate a gamekeeper's field trial with a prize, not for dogs of a highly bred type, but for good old "tyke" such as gamekeepers used (laughter and applause).

With Mr. E. Flower as M.C., some entertaining songs were rendered by Mr. T. A. Brewer, Mr. C. Ricketts, Mr. W. Doggerell and Mr. A. Jacob. "Drink, Puppy, Drink" rendered as a duet by Messrs.

Mark Genge and E. Flower, was greatly appreciated as were some recitations and other anecdotes, and Mr. Bert Emblen, a visitor from London, who also sang, presided at the piano throughout the evening.

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