

Cornholme Provides New Mayor

Coun. and Mrs. G. E. Boothman

Coun. George Edwin Boothman, Oakleigh Terrace, Cornholme, is to be Mayor of Todmorden for the next twelve months. The opinion that this is the age of the common man is supported by every artistic medium from broadcasting to paint. While the glare of publicity is focussed from time to time on the distinguished, the personal angle in journalism has been carried so far that it has become a catalogue of indiscretions. This is a result of the artist and the writer getting down into the crowd and being absorbed in the dust and the sweat only to find that the representative of the ordinary man is extraordinary and that the prototype of the common man is uncommon. Coun. Boothman represents the Cornholme Ward not only in the Council's records, but in the hearts of the people. The honour done him as chief citizen has been taken personally by every voter and it would not have been surprising had the occasion been celebrated by street dancing and decorations, fireworks and feasting.

Todmorden Labour Exchange. Some six months later he was offered the managership of the Cornholme branch of Messrs. Duckworth's, a position he still holds.

A KEEN CHURCHMAN

When the last war broke out, Coun. Boothman was unable to continue in membership with the Castle Grove Methodists owing to restriction in travelling. He then took an interest in Vale Baptist Church and Sunday School and for several years has been a superintendent and teacher of the adult class. Coun. Boothman's Christian outlook and principles have coloured the whole of his life and are responsible for his interest in public work and especially in child welfare and the care of old people. He was a member of the visitation committee to Stansfield View before the National Health Act. It was a realisation of his sympathetic interest in the conditions of the old people that led the Old Age Pensions Association to ask him to represent them on the Todmorden Town Council.



Coun. Boothman will not distinguish himself in the seats of the mighty. He will not command the ear and the attention of the county as some of his predecessors have done, or beguile with the brilliant after-dinner speech, but he has won a place in the affections of the worker who might knock on the Mayor's door in the fading light to ask for help and guidance in trouble or perplexity and be sure of a friend. While his predecessors have planned and directed the course of events in the Mayoral year, Coun. Boothman will pay the penalty of "belonging" to Cornholme. In an endeavour to serve them faithfully, as he has done for the past 29 years as manager of Messrs. James Duckworth, Ltd., grocers, Coun. Boothman is in for a very busy time and a heavy responsibility. At the end of the term of office the man who will be best able to assess its success or failure will be the common man.

SERVED IN RUSSIA AND INDIA

Coun. Boothman is a native of Todmorden and was a scholar at Priestwell School and Castle Grove Sunday School, where he subsequently became a teacher for 21 years and superintendent for seven years. On leaving school he sought the first opening, as was the custom in working class families, and became a weaver at Sandholme Mill, now no longer in use. In 1915 he joined the service of Messrs. Duckworth, Ltd., as errand boy at their Roomfield branch and in 1918, when he was called to the Army, he had some experience as relief hand at the several Todmorden branches. At 18 he was a member of the West Yorkshire Regiment and later transferred to the Machine Gun Corps. When he was demobbed in 1921 he had seen service in North Russia and India. In both places he was engaged in fighting; in India on the Waziristan frontier against skirmishing natives. Some of this time was spent in instructing members of the Indian Army in the use of the Vickers machine gun. Coun. Boothman came back to the industrial depression and took a temporary job as clerk in the Tod-

He was co-opted to the Council in 1944 and when elections were reintroduced after the war in 1945, he was returned having polled 1,153 in a three-cornered fight, and again in 1948. He has served on the following committees: Health, Highways, Libraries and Waterworks. He is a past president of Todmorden Chamber of Trade, which he served for two consecutive years, and a founder member and vice-president of Cornholme British Legion, on the committee of which he served for several years. He is chairman of the Old Age Pensions Association and a member of Shore Baptist Church Mutual Improvement Society.

THE MAYORESS

The Mayoress is a native of Cornholme and has lived in the village all her life, and was a scholar at Vale and Cornholme schools. She attended Shore Baptist Church as a girl and is now associated with Vale Baptist Church, being a member of the Married Ladies' Society. She is a founder member of the ladies' section of the Cornholme British Legion and has served on the committee. During the war she served in A.R.P. work with her husband. But it is in the home that the Mayoress-elect has distinguished herself. Coun. Boothman has the inspiration and support of a happy family life in which loyalty is the distinguishing feature. The eldest member of the family, Muriel, now Mrs. Swinburn, is a member of the Pharmaceutical Society and served her apprenticeship with Messrs. Boots, Ltd. Harry is in Canada under the exchange system with the Niagara Park Commission, Horticultural School and Wisley Royal Horticultural Society, where Mr. Boothman has served twelve months and has another twelve months to serve. He was apprenticed to the superintendent of the Todmorden Park. The youngest, John, is a student at Todmorden Grammar School, with ambitions to be a chemist.

Before her marriage in 1923, Mrs. Boothman was Miss Bertha Fitton, whose mother was a member of the well-known Crowther family of Dundee, Cornholme.