

Dr. Arthur Mussen - Justice of the Peace

Dr. Mussen was appointed a Justice of the Peace for County Antrim in 1891. His appointment proved to be popular in the local neighbourhood.

“ A very striking public tribute to the widespread popularity of Dr. Mussen was that which was paid him by the people of Glenavy and neighbouring districts on his appointment to be a Justice of the Peace for County Antrim in 1891. It was a remarkably enthusiastic exhibition of affection and esteem, representatives of all classes and every denomination, Protestant and Catholic, spontaneously availing of the opportunity to pay him honour. And in addition to an artistic illuminated address in album form, the gifts included a handsome silver tray, having the inscription: ‘Presented, with a silver tea and coffee service, a horse, harness, and baguette, and a pianoforte, to Arthur Mussen, Esq., M.D., J.P., by his friends on his appointment to the Commission of the Peace for Co. Antrim. - Glenavy, 22nd June, 1891.’ The sentiments of the company present were admirably conveyed by the Rev. Charles Watson, who had been called upon to preside. He said that Dr. Mussen had lived for over a quarter of a century in the full light that shines on a man’s public career, and the handsome presentation which the people of the district were making him was a splendid proof how worthily and honourably that career had been spent. When the Lord Chancellor showed the confidence placed in Dr. Mussen by appointing him a magistrate the people felt a desire to prove that that confidence was endorsed by them. It was emphasised in the address that ‘Your kindly disposition and unremitting attention have made your presence eagerly looked for in the house of suffering. By all classes in the community you are deservedly esteemed as a sincere and reliable friend.’ In his reply, Dr. Mussen revealed the keynote of his personality when he said, ‘It has ever been my earnest wish to associate the medical adviser with the sympathetic friend.’ ” (Belfast Telegraph, Friday 3rd July 1931)



A photograph showing the inscription on the silver tray presented to Dr. Mussen in June 1891

1891 Crumlin Petty Sessions

“These monthly sessions were held in the Courthouse, Crumlin, on Monday, at twelve o’clock, before Messrs. Rutherford, R.M. (chairman); C.E. McClintock, J.P.; and Dr. Mussen, J.P. Before the ordinary business was proceeded with, Mr. Williamson, solicitor, Antrim as senior practitioner, congratulated Dr. Mussen on his appointment to the magistracy and expressed his pleasure at seeing him on the bench that day. He was sure he would adorn the bench. Mr. Joseph Allen, solicitor, Lisburn as junior practitioner, re-echoed the sentiments of Mr. Williamson.” (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 2nd May 1891)

Inquest in Lisburn. Compliment to Dr. Mussen, J.P. 1891

“On Monday evening, Dr. Mussen, J.P., coroner for the South Division of Antrim, held an inquest in the Courthouse, Railway Street, on the remains of the child which had been found on Saturday evening last. The jury found a verdict that the child died from neglect at birth. At the conclusion of the inquest, Mr. James Brown, on behalf of the jury, addressing the coroner, said that since they last had the pleasure of seeing him he had been promoted to the Bench as a Justice of the Peace for the County of Antrim. The jury took the present opportunity of uniting in offering their congratulations on his well-merited and deserved promotion, and they sincerely hoped that he would long be spared to enjoy the honour, which they felt certain he would fill not only with credit to himself, but the community at large. Mr. Andrew Gillespie endorsed the remarks of the previous speaker. In reply, Dr. Mussen thanked Mr. Brown and the gentlemen of the jury for the eulogistic words they had used in congratulating him on the honour that had recently been conferred upon him, and also for their good wishes in respect to his health. He look upon it as just another mark of respect bestowed upon him by the inhabitants of his native town, and he appreciated it all the more for that fact. Lisburn men were always coming to the front, and it was a source of much pleasure to find himself now among the number. To himself he had always found the people of Lisburn the very essence of kindness, and he had always received from them the greatest respect. He, therefore, heartily thanked them for the compliments they had paid him on the present occasion. (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 30th May 1891)

Address and Presentation to Dr. Mussen, J.P., Glenavy 1891

“On Monday evening last the friends of Dr. Mussen met in the Glenavy Schoolroom to present him with an address and a substantial proof of their regard for him. Among those present we noticed the Revs. Canon Sayers, Charles Watson, J.A. Canning, C.F. Newell, J.A. Armstrong, and R. Kevin; Dr. Alister, Messrs. W Fitzgerald, J. Whitfield, J. English, J.G. Oakman, W.Laird, W. Higginson, W. Mairs, M. Armstrong, J. Taylor, E. Peel, W. Mountgarrett, E. Johnston, W.J. Phillips, P. Corken, R. Suffern, J. Moore, A.T. Cameron, M.A., W. Andrews, J.Farr, E. Irvine, W. Bullick, J. Corken, H.Gilliland, R.Marshall, J. Todd, C. Ivors, W. Arnold, J. Brown, F. Barnes, R. Arnold, and J. Lorimer; Mrs. Watson, Mrs. And Miss Mussen, Mrs. Lorimer, Mrs. Bullick, Miss. Donaldson, Mrs. McCabe, Mrs. Corken, Miss Allen. The Rev. Charles Watson, who was appointed chairman, expressed the pleasure it gave him to preside. He said Dr. Mussen had lived for over a quarter of a century in the full light that shines on a public man’s career, and the handsome presentation which the people of the district are making him is a splendid proof how worthily and honourably that career had been spent. When the Lord Chancellor showed the confidence placed in him by appointing Dr. Mussen a magistrate the people felt a desire to prove that that confidence was endorsed by them. The matter was taken up with hearty enthusiasm by all classes and denominations, and a response made which proved how deeply Dr. Mussen was valued as physician and friend. The Rev. Canon Sayers testified how highly Dr. Mussen was regarded in Ballinderry, and said that Dr. Mussen’s career as coroner was a sure omen of his success as a magistrate. The Rev. J.A. Canning, LL.B., on behalf of the Presbyterians, spoke as to the depth of affection with which Dr. Mussen was regarded by his people, and that towards himself he had acted the part of a kind and judicious friend. Mr. J. Moore, as representing the Methodists, expressed the pleasure it gave him to bear his testimony to Dr. Mussen’s skill and kindness during the past twenty- five years. Mr. J. English then read the address (which, with Dr. Mussen’s reply, will be found in our columns). Mr. J Lorimer, in most happy terms, presented the silver plate, reading the inscription on the salver, ‘Presented with a silver tea and coffee service, a horse, harness, and baguette, and a pianoforte, to A. Mussen, Esq. , M.D., J.P., by his friends on his appointment to the Commission of the Peace for the County of Antrim. Glenavy, June 22nd, 1891.’ Dr. Mussen , before reading his reply, spoke of the happy intercourse he had with the people during his career, the unfailing kindness and courtesy he had received from them, from his brethren in the medical profession, and from the ministers of the different denominations. He seemed greatly moved by the strong expression of regard which was being shown him. After reading his reply, the Rev. J.A. Armstrong proposed a vote of thanks to the gentlemen who had interested themselves in the movement, which was seconded by Dr. Alister, of Crumlin. Mr. W. Higginson, of Dundrod, replied on their behalf, and took the opportunity of emphasising the noble and brotherly spirit with which Dr. Mussen had always treated the poor. The silver plate was supplied by Messrs. W. Gibson & Co., and

was of special design; the baguette came from Mr. McCleave's, and the pianoforte from Mr. Crymble's. The address, in album form, beautifully bound in morocco, was supplied by the Ulster Stationery Company." (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 27th June 1891)

Address and Presentation to Arthur Mussen, Esq., M.D., J.P. 1891

"Dear Dr. Mussen - your many friends often wished for a favourable opportunity to give you some proof of the high esteem in which they hold you. Your appointment to the Commission of the Peace for the County of Antrim has now afforded us that which we desired.

The honour which you have received has, indeed, been well merited; and we feel assured that you will hold the position with dignity, and discharge your duties as magistrate with that uprightness which characterises all your actions.

During your medical career among us for over a quarter of a century, you have acquired and retained our fullest confidence, while your kindly disposition and unremitting attention have made your presence eagerly looked for in the house of suffering.

By all classes of the community you are deservedly esteemed as a sincere and reliable friend.

We recognise with pleasure how happy and peaceful your private life has been; and there you have shown us a type of the "Home, Sweet Home," of which as a nation we are so justly proud.

We beg your acceptance of the accompanying Silver Salver, Tea and Coffee Service; of a Horse, harness, and Waggonette, and of a Pianoforte.

We are happy to be able to assure you that this Presentation is a hearty and spontaneous expression of real regard for you; and this, we trust, will enhance its value beyond its intricate worth.

Our sincere wish for Mrs. Mussen, yourself, and family is a life of unalloyed happiness. (Signed on behalf of the Subscribers),

Charles Watson, M.A., Clk, Geo. Conway, P.P., V.F., James Lorimer, Joseph English, J.A. Canning, LL.B., Benj. Tisdall, B.A., Clk, John Corken, William Higginson. Glenavy, June 1891."

"Reply

My Dear friends - Pray accept my heartfelt thanks for your extremely kind address. The past quarter of a century which I have passed among you is to me a retrospect crowded with pleasant memories of acts of kindness on your part to me and mine. I sincerely rejoice in the thought that the present interesting occasion does not, as such incidents often do, mark a break in our present happy relations to each other, as nothing gives me greater pleasure than looking forward to spending my future days among those friends who have been so kind to me in the past. The satisfaction which my appointment to the County Magistracy has afforded you, and the confidence which you repose in me, enhance the gratification which I feel in being the recipient of that honour. My professional services have always been met by you with that cordial and considerate appreciation which is one of the greatest solaces of a medical man's anxious life. It has ever been my earnest wish to associate the medical adviser with the sympathetic friend. I feel utterly unable to express the pleasure which it gives me to accept your costly, handsome, and thoughtful Presents, which, although intrinsically valuable in themselves, are doubly precious to me as a memento of the voluntary spirit of good feeling with which they are given. On behalf of Mrs. Mussen and my family, I beg to thank you sincerely for your good wishes, which we all heartily appreciate and cordially reciprocate. Believe me, ever, Yours faithfully, A. Mussen." (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 27th June 1891)

Dr. Mussen attended the monthly petty sessions court at Crumlin. The Lisburn Herald dated Saturday, 1st September 1906 reported a humorous incident during one of the monthly Petty Sessions held in Crumlin before Colonel McClintock, J.P. (chairman), Dr. Mussen J.P., Messrs William Higginson J.P., W.P. Dickey, J.P. and Mr. T.J. English C.P.S.

"Another defendant stated that he couldn't send his child to school as the house was full of measles. A third pleaded the illness of his daughter. Dr. Mussen - 'Why then didn't you get a doctor's certificate?' Defendant - 'Because I had no doctor. The rates are high enough. (Laughter) I got some medicine in Lurgan which cured her.'"