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WILLOUGHBY VILLAGE HALL OPENED BY LAD.Y INCHCAPE

VICAR'S VIEWS ON LEISURE

Five years of steady toil on the part of the inhabitants of Willoughby reached fruition on Saturday, when the new Village Hall was formally opened by The Countess of Inchcape.

The Hall is a substantially built structure of pleasing appearance, contains an assembly room about 150 feet by 25 feet, with a stage, and on either side of the entrance are cloakrooms. There are also a kitchen, dressing-room, and convenient sanitary accommodation. The building is heated by the low pressure hot water system.

COUNTESS UNLOCKS DOOR

As Lady Inchcape alighted from her car, she was met by Mrs. Pearce (Willoughby House) and introduced to the Vicar (The Rev. G. E. M. Tonge), Mrs. Tonge, Mr. T. W. Willard (Architect) and others who played a part in the building of the new Hall.

Mr. Willard then presented Lady Inchcape with an ornamental key, with which she opened the Hall. The key was presented to Her Ladyship by Mr. Willard as a memento of the occasion.

After Lady Inchcape had entered the Hall, villagers soon filled all the available seats in order to hear various speeches and votes of thanks.

The Chairman was the Rev. G. E. M. Tonge, and he was supported by the Countess of Inchcape, Mrs. Pearce, Mrs. Tonge, Mrs. E. Wigg, Mrs. C. Montgomery, Mrs. J. Biggs, Miss. A. Biggs, Mrs. N. Hall, Miss. L. Isom and Messrs. T. W. Willard, E. Johnson, Braunston (Builder), F. Hancock, L. Hall, G. Ivens,

A. Hatwell, W. Quinney, W. Harding (Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee) and G. Hancock (Secretary of the Committee).

LEISURE AND AMUSEMENT

The Chairman remarked how pleased they were to see Lady Inchcape amongst them, but how sorry they were that Capt. Pearce was unable to be present through illness.

People nowadays were thinking more of the importance of their leisure time, and a Hall like the one they were in would fill this need for people who wanted

to amuse themselves. He believed that the Hall would help in that direction

as it was right in the centre of the village. As regards people's leisure time, it was a great thing if they were all able to amuse themselves. Some people nowadays had the idea that they could not amuse themselves but must be amused by others.

Continuing, the Vicar said he wondered who was the first person in Willoughby who had the idea of building a Village Hall. He knew that the first meeting of the Committee took place on March 10th 1928, and that Mr. Smith was the first Secretary. Thus it was more than five years ago when the idea was first thought of and it meant a good deal of hard work on the part of the inhabitants. Much encouragement had been given by Capt. and Mrs. Pearce.

EASIER TO DESTROY THAN BUILD

It was very easy to destroy anything, but hard to build anything up. There was a tendency in the world today to be impatient and directly anything did not progress the way people wanted it to they wanted to destroy it.

As to the future of the Hall the answer to that question rested with the people of Willoughby. "Make good use of it", he continued, "in the best traditions of what the life of a Village Hall in the country should be".

Lady Inchcape then declared the Hall open and little Betty Hirons handed Her Ladyship a bouquet.

Moving a vote of thanks to Lady Inchcape, Mrs. Pearce first apologised for her husband's absence. They were all delighted to welcome Lady Inchcape to Willoughby.

Mr. F. Hancock, seconding, said that now that they had a Hall in which they could pursue their social activities they could be very proud of what they had built, and it would be a heritage for generations to come.

£706 RAISED IN FIVE YEARS

A vote of thanks to the Hon. Secretary was proposed by Mrs. Tonge, who said that Mr. Hancock had all the qualifications of the ideal Secretary.

Seconding, Mr. W. Harding said there had been no slacking on the Secretaries part.

Mr. Harding stated that the Builders estimate for the Hall was £904.10s•

and the charge for furnishings etc. was £73.10s making a total expenditure of about £978.

On the income side there was a balance in the bank of.£513.19. 5d.

Subscriptions amounting to £42.2s and promises totalling £150. This made a total of £706.1s.5d. leaving £271.18s.7d. still to be raised. The raising so big a sum by a small village like Willoughby was really a remarkable effort.

The Chairman and Mrs. Tonge on several occasions had lent their grounds for Garden Fetes in aid of the Village Hall and Capt. and Mrs. Pearce had also helped the Committee considerably.

THE ORIGINATOR OF THE SCHEME

In reply, the Secretary said that he had been backed up well by the Committee.

Answering the Vicar's question to the originator of a scheme for a new Village Hall, he stated that on 10th March, 1928, Miss. Ella Hall, now Mrs. Tanser, asked the meeting to .discuss ways and means of getting such a Hall. They were indebted to Mr. Willard (Willard, Son and Ellingham, Architects, Rugby) for the fine design and to Mr. Johnson, the Builder.

Apologies were read from Mr. J. B. Johnson (Stroud) and Mr. W. Johnson, both of whom enclosed cheques, and the Mayor of Rugby (Alderman J. J. McKinnell, J.P.)

The Chairman thanked Capt. and Mrs. Pearce and all who had helped the fund, and Mrs. Pearce replied.

Then followed a sale of gifts for the benefit of the Hall Fund. (Braunston) acting as Auctioneer.

Mr. B. Rushall

This was succeeded by a Variety entertainment given by Mr. W. Lines, Mr. S. Moir (Songs), Miss. A. Porter M.A.O.D. Elem. (Dances) and Mr. Waddoups (Entertainer).