

PUDDLETRENTSHIDE  
WAR MEMORIAL HALL OPENED  
THE VILLAGE REMEMBRANCE TO ITS GLORIOUS DEAD

In the majority of villages in Dorset memorial crosses or tablets have been set up to commemorate their glorious dead who fell in the Great War, but the inhabitants of Puddletrenthide have perpetuated the memory of their 16 brave sons who made the supreme sacrifice by erecting a village hall, which, while being an enduring reminder of the patriots who answered the call of King and country, will supply a long-felt want for social and other purposes. The provision of this memorial, costing with equipment between £800 and £900, has not been accomplished without considerable organisation, careful thought, and self sacrifice, and it speaks volumes for the devotion and loyalty of the inhabitants to the project that, with the exception of £125, the sum of £830 odd that has so far been raised was provided in the village itself. This has been made possible by generous individual subscriptions from all classes of the community and by well-organised efforts, such as sales of work, open-air fêtes, &c. As to the sum of £125 to which reference has been made, it is well known that much of the land and property in Puddletrenthide belongs to Winchester College, the governing body of that old scholastic foundation generously gave £100 to the memorial fund, and £25 was subscribed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The responsible task of raising the necessary funds was entrusted to a representative committee, whose energy and enthusiasm were unbounded. In selecting the Vicar (Rev. B. D. Reed, B.D.) as chairman a singularly happy choice was made, and throughout he proved himself to be a

whole-hearted and indefatigable worker. His services contributed greatly to the success of the scheme, and warm commendation is due to the rev. gentleman and to his fellow members of the committee, namely:— Major P. le G. Gribble (hon. treasurer), Mesdames Reed, Blake, Brown, Green, Hicks, Perris, and Levi Riggs, Messrs. A. Brown, Elsworth, C. Groves, jun., A. Park, W. C. Smart, T. Wightman, and Wright.

When the committee were within measurable distance of securing the necessary funds plans were prepared by Mr Sydney A. Jackson, architect, of South-street, Dorchester, for the erection of a memorial hall on a central site generously given by the governors of Winchester College. The hall, well designed and substantially built, does great credit to Mr Jackson. Conveniently set back from the road, its dimensions are 40ft. by 20ft., and its solid brickwork is set off in the front with Portland stone dressings. The interior is faced with brick, with stone flooring and ceiling, and at the back of the hall are a kitchen and ante-room which will serve admirably for catering purposes on the occasion of social events. The lighting arrangements are well provided for by means of hanging oil lamps. Over the main entrance outside is an imposing and nicely finished oak pediment, and in this is inserted the following dedicatory inscription in bold sanserif lettering:—

“This hall is erected in proud and loving memory of those men in this parish who gave their lives in the Great War of 1914–1918 and as a thank-offering for the safe return of their comrades.”

Affixed on either side of the doorway are two smaller oak pediments with flanking tablets inscribed as follows, with moulded Portland stone shelves for flowers:—

*“Remember the Glorious Dead.”*

ALBERT JEHU BAKER  
 JAMES BATTRICK  
 GEORGE BOLLEN  
 CHARLES JOSEPH BUDDEN  
 THOMAS HENRY DIMENT  
 GEORGE FRIPP  
 FREDERIC THOMAS GOSNEY  
 THOMAS JAMES HICKS

*“Their name liveth for evermore”*

FREDERICK HALLETT  
 HENRY ROBERT HALLETT  
 CHARLES JEANES  
 OSCAR PAYNE  
 WILLIAM RANSOME  
 WALTER STURMEY  
 ALBERT JOHN SYMES  
 WALTER THOMPSON

The well-known building contractors, Messrs. Theo. Conway, Ltd. of Weymouth, were commissioned to erect the hall, and their work has given general satisfaction. In deciding on bronze dedicatory tablets the committee made a commendable choice, and the effective manner in which they have been designed and the clearness of the lettering is distinctly creditable to the makers, Messrs. R. Membury and Son, brass, bronze, and iron moulders, of Colliton-street, Dorchester. It is noteworthy that Messrs. Membury have supplied a number of war memorial tablets, chief among which are those on the cenotaph at Dorchester, and they are now preparing the tablets for the Sherborne town war memorial.

#### THE OPENING CEREMONY

Thursday was fixed for the dedication and opening of the hall, and it was made the occasion of an impressive ceremonial. Two Union Jacks and a pennant of flags arrested the eye outside \_\_\_\_\_ from view—the main one with tri-coloured bunting and the smaller tablets miniature Union Jacks. The interest of Winchester College in the event was manifested by one of its Fellows, Mr C. Dampier Whetham, F.R.S., attending to perform the opening ceremony accompanied by two of the bursars—Mr. Herbert Chitty, and Mr. Alan Arnold. Happily it was a fine afternoon, and there was a large assembly of the inhabitants outside the hall. Most of the committee were present, and others included the Misses Bridge, Rev. and Mrs. W. G. Newman (Puddlehinton), Dr. E. E. Dalston (Cerne Abbas), Mr. C. Smart, Mr. I. A. Stevens, Mr. S. A. Jackson (architect), and his assistant (Mr. Eric Lambert). In the foreground were several of the bereaved relatives, to whom the sympathy of the onlookers went out in their sorrow.

There was a reverent opening to the proceedings by the Vicar reciting appropriate collects, and all joined in the Lord's Prayer and the hymn, "O God, our help in ages past," the unaccompanied singing being most inspiring. Mr Douglas Jackman (layman in charge of the Puddletrenthide Baptist Church) read the appointed Lesson from John xv., which appropriately ended at the verse, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Afterwards the Rev. W. H. Boocock delivered an extempore prayer, in which feeling reference was made to the fallen heroes and the bereaved. The moment had then arrived for the unveiling of the tablets,

and, this having been smoothly and expeditiously performed by Mr. H. Chitty, the dedication prayer was said by the Vicar. Then with impressive effect the "Réveillé" was sounded by Trumpeter Farley, of the Dorset Battery R.F.A. and when the last note had died away Mr. Dampier Whetham unlocked the hall doors. The Benediction having been offered, the "Last Post" closed the outside ceremony, and a laurel wreath was deposited on one of the tablet shelves by Mr. A. Arnold, while relatives of the fallen brought their floral tokens.

All present then entered the hall, which was profusely adorned with flags, and a note of remembrance was struck by laurel wreaths affixed on the walls. The Vicar, in his capacity as chairman of the proceedings, made his way to the floral-decked platform, and he was accompanied by the three representatives from Winchester College and members of the committee. On looking round the well-arranged hall one felt here indeed was a fitting memorial to those who had given up all in the cause of Freedom and Right.

The VICAR said that it was with a feeling of intense thankfulness to Almighty God that their long-sustained efforts had been brought to a successful conclusion, and that feeling came from very full hearts. They regretted the absence of two very prominent members of the committee that afternoon. Major Gribble was kept away by an important business engagement, but he was present with them in thought, and had sent best wishes and greetings, also congratulations on the crowning of their efforts. Then Mrs. Levi Riggs was absent through ill-health having been confined to her house for many weeks. "I should also (continued the Vicar) like to speak of one who is no longer with

us in body, but I am sure that, if God allows, the late Mr. James Panton Homer is present with us in spirit. He was a good friend to Puddletrenthide, and certainly he was a true friend to me. As you all know, the dearest wish of his heart was that he should see built in this village a hall that could be used for the benefit of all, and by his counsel and help he brought us a good way along the road to success. He was the first treasurer of the fund, and it would not be fitting if we were to open the hall without mentioning what he did and how hard he worked for the effort." (hear, hear.)

Mr. DAMPIER WHETHAM then addressed the gathering as follows:

On behalf of Winchester College let me thank you for inviting representatives of the College to assist in your ceremony to-day. Our Warden, Lord Selborne, wished to be here, but was prevented by long-standing engagements, so it falls to Mr Chitty, Mr Arnold, and myself to express the cordial interest of the College in all that concerns the welfare of Puddletrenthide. The connection between the College and this village is a long one, while the link with Winchester itself is much longer. Mr Chitty will explain how it was the College acquired lands here in 1543—Mr Chitty knows everything—(laughter)—and Mr Arnold, who knows everything else—(more laughter)—will assure you how close the link still is, and how seldom the Warden and Fellows meet without discussing the affairs of Puddletrenthide. We have met to-day to inaugurate this hall in proud and solemn memory of the past, and in a cheerful hope of usefulness in the future. That is a good combination of motives, and I think I cannot more worthily employ the present—that moving point of contact where the

future becomes the past—than in using the few words I am privileged to say to you to enlarge on that one thought—memory of the past, hope for the future. Our memory of those terrible four years of war is indeed proud and solemn—proud because of all the splendid deeds wrought by men of our race, solemn because of the awful price in sacrifice and suffering at which those deeds were done. We look at the role of names—16 from this village alone—and think of all the countless thousands who like them, have died for freedom and the right. We think of the famous names of ships and regiments in which they fought—names so well known to England and to England's foes. We may indeed be proud and solemn when we remember the past. But what about the future—is it perchance a mockery to talk about cheerful hope? The world is still in confusion. The echoes of strife—nay, the strife itself—has not died away. And that England is comparatively safe and tranquil, that she stands erect with the victors and does not lie prone among the vanquished, was barely won by these brave dead men who gave their lives for England and for us. The years of war were awful, tragic, wonderful—awful in their load of danger and anxiety, tragic in their tale of loss of bright young lives, wonderful in the sense of common effort and unity of aim. Sometimes, in these days of disillusionment, we long for some of the spirit which won the war to bring a real peace to distracted Europe. What has gone wrong? Why is part of the world sick almost to death and reeling on the verge of an abyss of ruin? Why do we, even in England, suffer from divided counsels, from depression, poverty, and unemployment? Have these men indeed died in vain? I believe the chief reasons have been racial hatreds on the one hand, and want of

knowledge—knowledge especially of economic science—on the other. Most men are good—at all events most men mean well—but few men, even of those in high places, are wise. They failed to allow for the racial feeling which has rent Europe for a thousand years. They failed to understand or to control the overwhelming economic forces brought into play by the war and its consequences. But Europe is too big a theme for us to-day—let us confine our thoughts to England, where the problems are more manageable. Firstly, I think we all expected too much. We overlooked the fact that war means destruction of wealth, and that after such a war as this we must perforce all be the poorer. Had we realised that truth, the post-war boom might have been less hectic and the corresponding depression less severe. And had the financial authorities in London understood more fully the economic meaning of what was happening, I think they could have done something to check the boom and hold up the succeeding fall. My opinion is that the worst is over, that we shall now see a revival, and gradually fewer homes suffering from the dread evils of unemployment. It would be out of place to give reasons here. They depend chiefly on the monetary position in New York. But I do think there is cause for a modest but cheerful optimism. But whether or no the depression is yet passing away, we shall do well to make the best of things, to carry on our social life in a spirit of mutual goodwill and helpfulness. (Applause.) It is well that your war memorial should be a cheerful village hall, and it is well that the happy social life which will centre here should not forget that it *is* a memorial hall—a memorial of the self-sacrifice and common effort for a noble end by which

alone that life has been secured. Therefore, in memory of those that have fallen and for the well-being of those that shall come after, I declare this hall to be open. (Applause.)

MR. T. WIGHTMAN, on behalf of the Hon. Treasurer (Major Gribble), presented the financial statement of the War Memorial Hall Fund up to March 1st. The cash received from subscriptions and raised by the committee by sales and other efforts amounted to £833 3s. 6d. All sums promised had now been paid, but this total did not include sums received and specially earmarked by the givers for the furnishing of the hall. These, with the articles mentioned on the list hung up on the hall, might be taken as totalling about £30 in all. The expenditure authorised to date by the committee was as follows:—Fabric of the hall, including outbuildings not yet erected, about £725; architect's charges, £60; memorial tablets and canopies £32 5s.; lamps and stoves, £19 7s. 6d.; fencing, £11 7s. 3d.; chairs, £20 12s. 6d.; other furniture, £10 19s. 3d.; sundry expenses, £5—total, £884 11s. 6d. It would thus be seen that there was about £50 still to be raised in order to pay all dues and to clear the Hall Fund from debt. After that it would be necessary to purchase a piano and some more chairs at a cost of perhaps another £50; but the immediate task was to find the first £50, and it was hoped that they would go a long way towards that to-day. (Applause.)

A silver collection, totalling £6 2s. 6d., was then taken, and the VICAR announced that he had received the very welcome message from Mr. Jackson that the architect's fees would be £50 and not £60. (Applause.) They owed Mr. Jackson a great debt of gratitude. They had been an awful nuisance, as over and over again he

had had to alter the plans, but he had spared neither time nor trouble in seeing that they had a satisfactory hall and that the very best work was provided for the money. (Applause.)

MR. A. ARNOLD said it gave him the greatest pleasure to propose a vote of thanks to the committee, to whom the village was indebted for that beautiful memorial hall. He had had a good deal to do with memorial halls, village and parochial, especially in his own district, where the parish was so large that one hall was no good, and arrangements had to be made to have three. He only wished that

\_\_\_\_\_ in his parish because they satisfied themselves with army huts, that being the best thing they could get at the time. But if only they could have seen the ambition of Puddletrenthide in building that beautiful hall in which they were now assembled they would have satisfied themselves with two buildings instead of three, built of brick and tiles. There were very great advantages in having a hall of that description. In his parish it was put to the same sort of use as it would be in Puddletrenthide, where it would be for the benefit of all persons in the village—for concerts, whist drives, dances, and that kind of thing. Sometimes there was a difficulty in running a hall because everybody wanted to be master—(laughter)—and, if those present did not mind taking a note of warning, he advised them to be loyal to the committee, and not to worry about anything else. Let them take it for granted that the committee were doing their best for all of them and not for a few only. If the people made up their minds to be loyal then everything would work quite smoothly. In a special reference to the Chairman of the committee, Mr.

Arnold said that he had had the pleasure of knowing the Vicar ever since he came to Puddletrenthide and he satisfied himself at once that he was going to make a very good effort to get the hall provided, and he believed that he was right in saying that the fact of the hall being built was due entirely to the efforts of Mr. Reed and his (the speaker's) old friend, Mr. Panton Homer. (Hear, hear.) He hoped the hall would be found of very great benefit to the parish, and he felt sure that the names of the kind people on the committee who had given up their time and attention to it would be forever remembered in the parish. (Applause.)

The VICAR, on behalf of the committee, thanked Mr. Arnold for his very kind words and the gathering for the cordial manner in which they had passed the vote. What he had done personally he felt to be his duty, and, although Mr. Arnold had been kind enough to say that it was entirely due to him (the Vicar) and Mr. Homer that the hall had been provided that was a very great distortion of the truth, because without the loyal backing and helpful co-operation of the committee the work could never have been carried through. He should like to put on record and say most emphatically that no man could have worked with a better, more helpful, kindly, and loyal committee than that over which he had the privilege to preside. (Applause.) They had passed through some dark days, because if they carried their memories back four years they would recall the great rise in the cost of building materials and in the wages of the building operatives. It was at that time hoped that the hall would have been built for £500 or a little more, and that was there objective at the start; but as they had heard from the details given by Mr.

Wightman, it had cost considerably over £800, and would be £900 before everything was finished. If he had not had behind him a united committee—and representing, he was glad to say, every class and every section of the village community—it would have been impossible to carry out a task of that kind. Of course, it would not have been possible without the help that had been received from the village itself, in the way that it had assisted and appreciated the committee's efforts in the various things that had been undertaken. But he wanted everyone to realise, as perhaps they had not done hitherto, what a real self-denying work had been done by the elected committee; a less loyal-hearted body of men and women would have given up the task in despair months or years ago. Nothing he could say would express fully the debt that was owing to the committee.

Mrs. HICKS, on behalf of the committee and parish generally, proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Dampier Whetham, who had kindly come to open the memorial hall, and also to Mr. Chitty and Mr. Arnold, the representatives of Winchester College, for having come a long distance to be present on that memorable occasion. They desired to thank the College very much for the kindly interest taken by giving the site for the hall and financial help, and also for legal advice, which had been given gratuitously. (Applause.)

The vote was accorded with acclamation.

Mr. DAMPIER WHETHAM said it was a very great pleasure to be present at that ceremonial. As Mr. Arnold had said, there was nothing more useful than a village hall, and he trusted that it would always be

a great success in Puddletrenthide. (Applause.)

Mr. CHITTY said he desired to add his deep thanks for the kind things that Mrs. Hicks had said about the College. Earlier in the proceedings Mr. Whetham referred to the length of the connection between the College and Puddletrenthide, and truly it was a long connection. Three hundred and eighty years ago an event happened which brought the College into contact with Puddletrenthide, and he hoped that they all felt that it had been attended with the happiest results. Henry VIII., who at any rate was known by reason of the number of his wives—(laughter)—had enjoyed Hampton Court and was fond of hunting. Winchester College had been endowed with property in the same neighbourhood, and in order that Hampton Court chase might be increased in size the College property became a sort of Naboth's vineyard to the King. Those were the days when monasteries were dissolved, and it happened that Hyde Abbey, a famous monastery at Winchester, had been possessed of the manor of Puddletrenthide, and that, on the dissolution of the monastery, passed to the Crown. Then King Henry VIII., in order to increase the size of Hampton Court chase took the property belonging to Winchester College and was good enough to give in exchange some other property, included in which was the manor of Puddletrenthide. For himself, enjoying as he had for something like 20 years an annual, and sometimes more frequent, visit to Dorset and Puddletrenthide, he could not regret that the College was not now the owner of property in the neighbourhood of Hampton Court, valuable as no doubt it would be, for the College was fortunate in having for tenants and friends men of Dorset and men

of Puddletrenthide. (Applause.)

In the early evening there was a well attended public tea, which was succeeded at 7.30 by a social and concert. Despite the rain, the hall was absolutely full, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. The concert was provided by the Bohemian Concert Party from Dorchester, whose efforts met with a most enthusiastic reception, nearly every item being encored. The sum received during the day for the hall furnishing fund amounted to over £27, bringing the total raised to date by the committee to over £860.

Footnote: There are two small sections of the report which were impossible to read from the original report due to damage to the newsprint