

FETE IN AID OF CHURCH REPAIRS 1933

'Christopher Wren Ladder'



The parishioners of East Knoyle have been keenly interested in the progress of a small figure of Christopher Wren climbing a miniature ladder in the south porch of the parish church.

On Saturday afternoon, he was more than half way up, and then, during the weekend, he took his biggest leap, which carried him to the top. This meant that the sum of £425 1s had been raised, in response to an appeal to meet the total cost of rehanging the peal of six bells, repairing a portion of the nave roof and providing anew boiler for the heating apparatus.

Donations received since the fund was opened early in the summer, and grants, had made Christopher's climb a fairly steady one up to the week-end, and then £56 15s 6d came in from a fete and sale of work held in the grounds of Knoyle House, besides another substantial grant, and he suddenly found himself on the top rung. The figures show the progress of his ascent: Donation £219; Fete and sale of work £56 15s 6d; Donations to the sale of work £10 12s; Grants £128; Total £415 1s. Christopher's aspirations having been satisfied, the appeal is now closed.

The work, which is being done so expeditiously and so thoroughly, was fully described in an article in last week's issue of the Western Gazette and it was also there recalled how tradition has it that Christopher Wren found his first love for architecture by clambering over the roof of this same church when similar repairs were being carried out during his father's incumbency. It was a happy idea that in order to show the progress of the fund, one of the daughters of the Rector, the Rev E Cross, should make and paint a figure of Christopher Wren, similar to the one in an embossment in the chancel, and show him climbing a ladder to the £400 project in hand.

Widespread Interest

A list of donations by the side of the ladder shows that gifts have come from people far and near who are interested in East Knoyle church. Because of the associations with Wren, the Royal Society and authorities of St Paul's Cathedral have sent donations; gifts have come from many private folk from the neighbourhood and from afar, and trades people and residents of the village have made their offerings. The whole of the village seemed to be in this effort, and the unit and enthusiasm with which it has been pursued is eloquent, not only of the deep veneration for the parish church, and for what it stands for, but also of the friendship and loyalty which the Rector, by his own devotion to his parish, has inspired. Mr Cross and his Council are looking forward to a great day shortly, when it is hoped the Bishop of Salisbury will be able to attend a dedication service and inaugurate another chapter in the spiritual life of the parish.

The Fete

Hopes were high that the little Christopher would get a big lift-up as a result of a fete and sale of work and of livestock, which was held on Saturday in the grounds of Knoyle House, by kind permission of the Dowagers Lady Pembroke. Stalls and competitions were laid out on the lawns and terraces in front of the house. The setting is so delightful that that of itself gave pleasure to the visitors, apart from the many attractions. The sale was opened by Dean McGann, of Bourton, who had charge of the parish for some weeks a few years ago, and who was staying the week-end with Lady Pembroke, the Rector, and members of the Parochial Church Council.

The Rector said how delighted they were to see again with them that day their "guardian angel" of the parish, Lady Pembroke. They had all thought about her a great deal during the months she had been unwell, and they thanked God that she had recovered. They thanked her very sincerely for her kindness in allowing them the use of those beautiful grounds, which made a perfect setting for a sale of that kind on a perfect day. It was all in line with the continual goodness which they knew so well, and which they found it so difficult to express. Some people were still so foolish as not to believe in a guardian angel. He could only suggest that they should come and live at East Knoyle and they would change their opinion.

Secondly, he wanted to welcome Dean McGann, who had so kindly come to open the sale. He knew from what he heard as he went about the parish how much the Dean had endeared himself to all during the time he had charge of the parish some years ago, and how delighted they would all be to see him again and hear him preach at the morning and evening services on the following day.

Thirdly, he wanted to recall what the objects of the sale were, although they all knew them. They had to find a large sum of money to repair the bells and the roof and he was sorry to have to say that the ladder which was in the south porch of the church with the little man climbing up, who had endeared himself so much, really ought to be lengthened a bit because supplementary estimates had had to be obtained for a little more work on the bells and an extra piece of roof which needed to be done in the north transept. But the response so far had been perfectly wonderful and in the last few months they had gathered £245 and there were still a few subscriptions he hoped might come in. He would like that sale to give the little man a big push up the ladder. Everything seemed set for the success of that effort. They had Lady Pembroke with them and Colonel the Hon George Herbert would be with them later in the day. Unfortunately he could not be present at the opening owing to bereavement, and he had to be away to the funeral. They had Dean McGann with them to encourage them, a most wonderful band of willing helpers, and lots of people with their pockets full of money; and finally the Rector, however he felt three months ago about the raising of £400, today was full of hope and confidence that the money would be found very shortly.

The Helpers

Among the things offered for sale were pens of livestock which had been given by Mr C Hyde, Mr H Tucker, Mr P Chubb, Mr W Drew, Mr S Fletcher, Mr T Forward, Mr P Jesse, Mr C Sanger, Mr Young, Mrs Hare, Mrs Cross and Miss Richardson. They included poultry, pigeons, kittens and puppies. Those responsible for the sale were Messrs R Jess, W Dowding and R Young.

Other departments were under the following:

Produce stall, Mrs Stevens, Miss Jacob, Nurse Wright

Work Stall, Mrs Fulford and Mrs Oldfield

Sweets, Mrs Upton and Mrs Young

Samples, Miss Wilkinson

Jumble: Mrs Cross, Mrs Woodford, Mrs Barnes, Miss Brown

Second-hand furniture: Mr T Fowler, Miss Green

Tea: Mrs Shand, Mrs Garrett, Mrs J Francis, Mrs H Fowler, Mrs T Fowler, Mrs Smith, Mrs Beale, Mrs Tuck, Mrs Hubert

Tanswell, Mrs L Tanswell, Mrs Jesse, Mrs Elliott, Mrs Hallett, Mrs Ford, Mrs Lever

Light drinks: Misses Icke

Artificial flowers: Misses Bromley

Second-hand books: Misses Huleatt

Games and competitions

Skittles: Messrs Lever, J Francis, A Garrett

Bowling: Mr Percy Jesse

Ringing the stake: Master Frank Jesse

Clock golf: Major Ford, Master John Fulford

Guessing the weight of the cake: Miss Cross, Miss Matthews

Bagatelle: Miss Della Cross

Beans in a bottle: Miss O Matthews, Miss P Cross

Weighing machine: Master Harold Garrett

Croquet: Master Arthur wood and Dennis Ford

At the gate were Mr Woodford, Mr Fulford, Mr Samson and Colonel Upton

Competition winners

Guessing number who attended sale: Colonel C D Upton

Weight of cake: Miss Maria Matthews

Beans in bottle: Miss I Forward and Mr H Garrett

Croquet: Mr P Jesse

Bagatelle: Miss E Ward

Bowling: 1 Mr B Jesse, 2 J Francis

Skittles: Mr B Ford and Miss Wilkinson

Clock golf: Miss P Motlow, Mr P Jesse

Skittles: Mr P Jukes, Mr E Chubb

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