

The Opening of Martley Memorial Village Hall

On 6 February 1922, Martley's Memorial Hall was formally opened. The opening ceremony was reported in Berrows Journal as follows:

“Memorial Hall – An army hut, erected near the centre of Martley, on a good brick foundation, the outside dressed with a preservative and the interior papered and decorated, forms the excellent Memorial Hall at Martley. A tablet, containing the names of men from the parish who died or served in the war is placed on the inside wall and will serve as a permanent reminder of their services for King and country. The opening ceremony took place on Monday evening when a large company assembled in the Hall, presided over by Col Carr, with Mr J Davis in the vice-chair. There were also present: Brig Gen Benson, Ref J F & Mrs Hastings, Mrs & Miss Nash, the Misses Martley, Mr & Mrs Holmes, Mr & Mrs W H Holliday, Mr J Dovey, Mr C Howlett, Mr & Mrs Wm Nott, Mr & Miss Humpherson, Mrs Ballard, Mrs G Jones, Mr & Mrs Sherwood, Mr & Mrs Fidoe, the Members of the Committee, with Mr D Wood, Hon Sec, relatives of those who died, and many others. Col Carr said the building had been erected to serve as a war memorial and as a Workmen's Club. Brig Gen Benson had come at considerable inconvenience to unveil the tablet and perform the opening ceremony. He appealed for energetic support for the Club, for unless that was given, it would not serve as the memorial it was intended to be. The honorary members and lady members would find this a convenient way of showing their gratitude to the men who fought. Brig Gen Benson, who had a most cordial reception, said that he loved to meet again the men whom he had served with and their friends. The objects of the memorials being erected all over the country were, first, to thank God for the men who had come through the conflict, and secondly to do honour to those who had “gone west”. Thirdly we had got to see that their dependants did not suffer for their great loss, and that those who returned did not suffer for their absence and the assistance they had given in the War. Brig Gen Benson then unveiled the memorial. Col Carr read the names of those who died and who served, and the hymn, “O God, our help in ages past” was sung, followed by suitable prayers by the Rector. Songs were given by Mrs Badger, Miss Nash, Miss Lacy, Mr Evans, Mr Sherwood, Mr J C Holliday and recitations by Mrs Rimell. Light refreshments were handed round, kindly given by Mrs Aston, Mrs Copping, Mrs J Davis, Mrs Fidoe, Mr J Holliday, Mrs Humpherson, Mrs G Jones, Miss Martley, Mrs Nash, Mrs Roberts, Mrs Rowley, Mrs Walters and Mrs Wilcox. Dancing followed, and was kept up till midnight. A silver collection yielded the sum of £7 14s for the funds.”

(Note: Brig Gen Rion Philip Benson was GOC RA 5th Army Corps 197-18. CB 1917, CMG 1916)

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