

Wrexham Slums by Night & Day

12th January 1907

Mr Chaplin, at one time President of the Local Government Board, said that when he held office, that "Local Authorities have most extensive powers under five different Acts for dealing with slum and kindred dwellings." "After what I have seen of this class of dwellings in Wrexham, it was with little difficulty I came to the conclusion that our Municipal Authority has not, by a very long way, made use of the powers referred to in the quotation, to within anything like the limit. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that in Wrexham, as in many other towns, local government has been largely left in the hands of two sections, or parties.

One party may be termed the trading class and the other section consists of landlords, tenants, speculators and kindred folk. Happily, however, times are beginning to change, and there is every hope that in Wrexham, at least, with the newly appointed medical officer, and other recent changes, many, if not all of the worst conditions with which the lowest classes in the town are surrounded will be altered.

Some councils claim to have done something in the way of housing reform. True, if the pulling down of houses a few hours before they would have fallen of their own accord. Housing reform is not just the pulling down of undesirable buildings, but also the erection of better and more sanitary ones. The driving of people out of one slum into another makes matters worse, for then the authorities have to contend with over-crowding.

Recently, I have made one or two visits by night and day to Wrexham slums and the fact was vividly forced home to my mind that a serious state of things, indeed, exists and hails for needy remedy. Human beings are living in the very centre of the town in places, which no civilised country should allow to exist. There is a large number of courts and alleys with quite a big population, with little, if any, sanitary arrangements and about the same amount of ventilation. How the town has escaped from serious epidemics is

a miracle, but certainly not much credit is due to those who have the management of the affairs of the town under their control.

Feeling curious as to how a certain portion of the inhabitants lived, and as to what their surroundings were, I made inquiries and found that quite a number of men and women make their abode in common lodging houses. The people who frequent these lodging houses are chiefly the unemployed or those, who may have been fortunate enough to have got temporary work. The Police keep a sharp eye on them and are able to put their hands upon anyone who is 'wanted' with a little trouble. I was then led to a very dark area where I was told I was in a square. There was not a public house and not a light from any of the fifteen or twenty inhabited dwellings, which surrounded me. In these dwellings a large number of the poorest classes live. The families consist of 3 and 13 and the airspace is hardly sufficient for the lesser number. The rooms are small and dirty and the utmost squalor exists. Many of the windows will not open and many broken panes of glass are replaced by paper and rags. There is little or no drainage and a similar state of things I found existed in the other slums I visited.

• **Wrexham New Public Library – Opening Ceremony**

15th February 1907

The following is the official programme issued by the Town Clerk (Mr Lawson Taylor).

2.45pm The Mayor and the members of the Council assemble at the Guildhall for the purpose of robing, and afterwards proceed to the Library.

3.00pm The Mayor will introduce Sir Foster Cunliffe at the entrance to the building, after which the Mayoress will hand to Sir Foster Cunliffe, a presentation key.

- Opening of the building by Sir Foster Cunliffe.

- After the ceremony, the company assembled will enter the Library, and proceed to the Lecture Room.
- Chairman's remarks.
- Speech by Sir Foster Cunliffe.
- Vote of thanks to Sir Foster Cunliffe.
Proposer, Mr. John Francis, J.P., Chairman of Public Library Committee.
Secunder, Mr. J Hopley Pierce, Vice-Chairman of Public Library Committee.
- Vote of thanks to the Mayor and Mayoress.
Proposer, Mr. George Frater, honorary secretary of the Public Library Committee.
Secunder, the Ex-Mayor (Mr. Councillor F Birkett Evans),
Chairman of the
Library Building Committee.

The design of this Library was placed first in competition with over one hundred others in April 1905. The building is now completed. The materials used are Cefn stone and red Ruabon bricks. The front is covered with Westmoreland slates, and the back roof with Bangor slates. The interior is treated simply the suitably to the purpose of the building. The basement contains a kitchen, scullery, and the heating apparatus. The ground floor consists of a ladies room, magazine room, librarian's room, lending library and news-room. The first floor consists of a very fine lecture hall, 50ft by 18ft, with curved panelled ceiling. There is a retiring room with lavatory adjoining a committee room, book-store, and a fine broad landing, approached by a flight of stone steps. The corridor is lighted by two lantern lights. The heating has been carried out on the low pressure system of Messrs Dargue, Griffiths & Co., of Liverpool and the electric lighting by the Triplex Company, of Wrexham. The wrought iron entrance gates were made by Messrs Hardman, Powell & Co, of Birmingham. The stone carving, consisting of the Borough Arms and the Dragon of Wales, were executed by Mr. Bosker of Wrexham. The indicators were supplied by Messrs Cotgrave, which are their latest invention. The library,

as of course is known, is the gift of Mr. Andrew Carnegie who has given the total cost of building and furnitute, viz £4,300. The architect is Mr. Vernon Hodge of Teddington: the contractor is Mr R Rowley, Gresford: and Mr. Benjamin Owen, Wrexham has acted as clerk of works.

Wrexham County – Theft from the Workhouse

16th February 1907

John Flannigan, labourer, an inmate of the Wrexham Union Workhouse, was charged with stealing two pairs of corduroy trousers and a waistcoat, the property of the guardians.

On Sunday morning last at about 8.45am, John Flannigan had been given permission to leave the house in order to attend the Roman Catholic Church, and he went out. Later in the day, a witness received information from the police that Flannigan had in his possession a bundle of clothes. Witness asked the police to detain Flannigan whilst enquiries were being made. Witness identified the clothes now produced as the property of the Guardians and valued them at 30s.

PC Paul Roberts said he was stationed in Wrexham and on the day named at about 10.00am he was on duty in Chester Road, when he saw Flannigan come out of Cooper's Lane with a bundle. He acted in a suspicious manner, and witness asked him what the bundle consisted of. Flannigan replied "They are a suit of clothes, the property of the Union." Witness then asked him why the clothes were in his possession and Flannigan said "I was sent for them this morning to Rhosnesni for the Union." Witness then asked why the clothes should have been at Rhosnesni and Flannigan replied "A man absconded from the Union yesterday, left his clothes at Rhosnesni and sent a messenger to the Union to say where he had left them." PC Roberts next inquired what Flannigan was going to do with the bundle and he replied he was going to take it to the Workhouse. Flannigan then went away and witness followed him to Abbot Street, where Flannigan entered a

house. After a few minutes interval, Flannigan reappeared without the bundle and on being questioned by the constable said he had left it in the house and was going to call for it again. He added that he was going to see a friend who lived in Mount Street and that he left the bundle in the house because he did not like being seen carrying a parcel on a Sunday. The constable said he wanted to see the bundle and Flannigan took him to the house on Abbot Street and there found that the bundle contained the clothes produced. Witness took Flannigan and the bundle to the County Buildings and detained him while he made inquiries.

The Prisoner (to Witness): "Did you see me steal the clothes? – No" "Where did I steal them from? - I don't know, the clothes are the property of the Union." "When you first met me and asked me what I had in the bundle, did I not tell you what was in it? – Yes"

Flannigan was then charged and pleaded not guilty. On being sworn he said that on the previous Sunday morning as he was going to church, he met a man who told him that he would find a bundle of clothes under a hedge on the way to Rhosnesni and the man described the place. Flannigan said he went to the spot and found the bundle and noticed that the clothes belonged to the Union. He was going to deliver them up to the Union when he went back, but as he did not like carrying a bundle about the streets on a Sunday, he left them at a house in Abbot Street, where he used to lodge.

Dr Williams (Workhouse master): "Where did he get these things from?"

Chairman: "When did you miss the clothes?"

Dr Williams: "We did not miss them at all. They were taken out through a back way."

Chairman: "Have you evidence of that?"

Dr Williams: "No, it is only hearsay."

Flannigan said he never took them from the house.

The Magistrates then considered the case in private and eventually sentenced Flannigan to seven days imprisonment.

Wrexham Education Committee - Alexandra School: The Cost

23rd February 1907

The Finance and Staff (Sub-Committee) in their report, recommended that the Commerce be asked to recommend the Town Council to apply to the Local Government Board for sanction to borrow £17,500 to defray the cost of the creation of the Alexandra School.

Alderman T Jones responded, "I feel that £17,500 is rather an alarming amount for these schools. I should like to know on what basis it had been arrived at. We have already had a sum of £2,000 for the land." "I understood that the cost for 1,060 children would be £12 10s per head, a total of about £12,500. I think it most unreasonable to ask for £17,500 when we have already had £2,000 for the purchase of land. What is the explanation? Surely there must be some mistake?."

The Clerk responded "The £12,500 did not include everything."

The Chairman "The original estimate of £2,500 did not include furniture, architects' commission, quantity surveying and clerk of the works, which will come to over £900."

Councillor Parry said that in the case of the Victoria schools the site cost only £400 less than this one, and the total cost of the school amounted to only £16,113 including buildings, furniture, and everything. If they took the same average as at the Victoria School - £12 10s, per child it amounted to only £12,500.

The Chairman "There is one item in regard to the Victoria School which you have not mentioned. The sum of £1,400 was derived from the sale of the British school, and this was added to the other." "The architects' estimate was £16,459. To that amount, roughly speaking, the Committee added six percent for contingencies to make sure that they would have enough. It should be remembered that in addition to the estimate of £12 10s

per head, there would be about £900 for furniture, £950 for commission, quantities, clerk and legal expenses, and £850 for roads, approaches, playing fields, etc. Altogether with some smaller items, that brought the amount to nearly the sum mentioned."

The Clark "It is desirable that application for the loan should be made without delay, as the school is very much required. The fact that you apply for £17,500 does not mean that it must all be spent." "There is a sum of £1,041 for contingencies, which might be excluded, as it will probably not be required. The architects say they do not think their estimate will be exceeded."

Councillor Williams moved as an amendment that they apply for power to borrow £16,000 only. Councillor Jarman seconded this, and it was carried by eight votes for to five against.

Wrexham Town Council – Alleged Nuisance in Watery Road

16th March 1907

The Health Committee of the Wrexham Town Council at it's monthly meeting, discussed the alleged nuisance in Watery Road.

"It will be remembered that at the last meeting of the Committee, the Sanitary Inspector reported that the owner of a stable and yard in Watery Road used a dung pit in the yard, which was situated right under the bedroom window of an adjoining house. This was considered by the Committee to be a nuisance and a statutory notice was ordered to be served, calling upon the owner to remove the nuisance."

"The Sanitary Inspector now reported that the owner had discontinued the use of the dung pit, but was using a cart which was placed nearer to the window referred to than the dung pit, and allowed the cart to remain in that position for some days until it was full. He considered this to be a greater nuisance than that which previously existed."

Alderman Thomas Jones: "Do you consider this to be a nuisance?"

The Sanitary Inspector: "It will be a nuisance wherever it is left in yard. If he would take the manure away every morning it would be alright."

Alderman Thomas Jones: "I can't agree with the Inspector that a bit of horse manure left in a yard is a nuisance."

The Sanitary Inspector: "It is left underneath a bedroom window sir."

The Chairman: "I would not like to sleep in that bedroom."

Alderman Thomas Jones: "I can't see how he can put it there. I can't conceive that it is a nuisance to anyone. I am not against nuisances, but I don't think you can possibly prove that horse manure put in a cart day after day and kept for three or four days is a nuisance."

The Sanitary Inspector: "Ask a doctor."

Alderman Thomas Jones: "Has he got a place to take it to?"

The Sanitary Inspector: "He can hire one."

Councillor Edwards Jones: "We are advocating open windows and I defy anyone to open a window if there is manure below".

The Chairman: "We are a Public Health Committee and I hope we have more progressive views than that."

Wrexham Slumdom

13th April 1907

Important Report by Wrexham's Medical Officer

At the monthly meeting of the Health Committee of the Wrexham Town Council on Wednesday, Alderman J B Francis presiding, Dr D Ll. Williams, the medical officer for the borough, submitted an important report dealing with the conditions of the dwelling houses of the Wrexham poor and labouring classes.

The report follows:-

"I should like, first of all, to draw attention to the necessity of keeping the approaches and surroundings of dwelling-houses absolutely clean. I am quite convinced that a great deal of preventable sickness and even mortality are due to insanitary surroundings. In view of the extraordinary number of deaths of infants which occurred from epidemic diarrhoea last summer, it behoves the Health Committee to take immediate steps to prevent the recurrence of such a lamentable loss of young life, by the removal of these unfavourable sanitary conditions."

"The approaches to the courts are too narrow and too low, obstructing the free currents of air and rendering the dwellings very dark. Again, the pavements of the courts are deplorable, consisting of uneven cobble stones, making it difficult to cleanse the place in an efficient matter, the uneven surface favouring filthy conditions, which pollute the air and soil. It would be well if the owners could be prevailed upon to asphalt these courts, leaving the cobble stones as a foundation. The backyards should as far as possible be paved with tiles and proper channels constructed to the yard gullies."

"It was only too evident during our inspections, viz, the deposit of human excreta on the pavements and passages leading to those courts, the same thing appeared frequently in the ashpits."

"In addition to the deplorable state of the so-called 'slum property', another very important factor was very vividly brought to our notice, namely the absence of any attempt on the part of the occupants to make their abodes clean and comfortable, the want of ordinary care in regard to their children, and the extraordinary amount of preventable dirt present."

"We came across several across several instances of choked drains, easily remedied by the removal of dirt and rags from the gullies. In some instances the windows were found covered in rags and paper, nearly always closed, the rooms unswept and the conveniences unemptied. The women, I regret to add, did not appear to have used soap and water for a considerable time, and the small children had a very dirty and unneared form of appearance."

He considered that a strong Sub-Committee ought to visit the place and if they were of the opinion that certain houses should be condemned, then he was sure the Health Committee would agree to the recommendation.

There was no doubt that in Wrexham at present there was a great deal of insanitary property, but they must bear in mind that the people who lived in this class of houses were accustomed to it, and preferred to live in allies and slums. To go in for building houses for the working classes out of the Corporation funds was a very big order. Respect should be shown to the owners of property, who had been providing a fair class of property for the workman who was prepared to pay a reasonable rent. He would move that the report be adopted and that the Committee visit the places.

This motion was seconded by Dr. Edward Jones. There was not much left for a working man with a family after 5s or 6s was taken out of his weekly earnings, for rent, and therefore he thought the Corporation should enter into some scheme in order to bring the owners of these houses to their senses. If the Corporation were to begin to erect houses to bring in a rental of 3s or 3s 6d a week, then property owners would probably enter into competition.

Councillor Hugh Evans said he had called attention to the state of things, which the Medical Officer had reported when he, Councillor Evans, had first come onto the Council, but they would not believe him. Did the Committee intend to evade the matter now by appointing a Committee? It was the duty of the Committee to act upon the instructions of the doctor. The owners were well able to look after the property considering the rents they got.

The report was then adopted and the whole Committee will visit the various properties at an early date.

Quotes from the report of Dr. Williams:

"In one place, the rooms were found exceedingly dirty, much more so than any I ever came across in the slums of Edinburgh and the East of London."

"In some of the houses there was an entire lack of the necessary comforts of life, no bedsteads and no bedding, the inmates sleeping on the floor."

"On the other hand, we observed an occasional house in some of the courts already described clean and tidy, the occupant though poor, seemed altogether a different class of people, everything being done to brighten their homes."

"The large municipalities have now attached a number of lady sanitary inspectors to their respective health departments."

"I should like here to state my appreciation of the excellent work done by the district nurses."

"I was rather surprised that the agents, who collect the rents for this class of property, allowed their dwellings to get into such a state of decay and deterioration. Surely their responsibility does not consist in merely collecting the rent? Yet, I am informed that they will do practically nothing unless compelled to do so under notice."

"Our aim should be to provide hygienic homes for the respectable poor and labouring classes, many of whom are not in a position to pay a rent remuneration to the private builder."

The Chairman said that with regard to the question of housing of the working classes, he thought it would be a good thing if the Town Clerk were asked to prepare a memorandum of the Housing

and Working Classes Act up-to-date, so that the Committee might know something more about it.

At the end of the report was a schedule of the houses, which it was proposed should be demolished; those which should be ordered repaired by the owners; and those which were in good order. The Medical Officer was armed with very great powers. He had the Local Government Board at his back and the Council had to see that no injustice was done to the property owners. He thought, therefore, that the best plan would be for the whole Committee to make a tour of inspection of the property mentioned in the schedule. He thought they should have more information about the Housing of the Working Classes Act before arriving at any definite decision.

Councillor Glascodine said it was very sad and serious that such a state of things as contained in the report should be allowed to exist in Wrexham. Something should be done to improve the slums.

Wrexham Slums – Three Letters

April – May 1907

“Sir, Disgusted’s letter in your last issue hardly does justice to the filthy place in Henblas Street. The place in question has no less than eight pools of what was correctly described as “stagnant filth” but this is not all. I have frequently noticed rotten eggs, putrid fish, butcher’s meat and when the season is on, decaying vegetables and fruit, together with other things equally objectionable. In addition to this, the slate slabs are crumbling in decay, the coating of tar has long been washed away, the walls are innocent of lime wash and the concrete doors are badly worn and cracked. As you co-respondent stated, a few yards from this delightful spot our Corporation allows all sorts of dairy produce to be disposed of! I take the liberty of asking our Medical Officer of Health one question: Did he in his recent visit to the slums, discover a single place that would compare with this insanitary Corporation property. I would in conclusion ask his opinion as to having such a place close to where butter, etc, are sold. Henblas

Street is an important thoroughfare, but it is one of the worst looked after streets in the whole of the town. Then there is the Corporation garden in the Guildhall Square. Could not the Parks and Gardens Committee do something to make this spot look better?" **OBSERVER**

"Sir, Allow me a few lines to thoroughly endorse the remarks of 'Disgusted' in your last issue. I am at a loss to know why the members of the Health Committee allow the nuisance to exist, month after month, and year after year, without any steps being taken to remedy the existing state of affairs. Is the town in such a poverty stricken state that a few hundred pounds could not be spared for the improvement of the existing conveniences and the provision of additional ones? Several thousand pounds were thrown away by the Council last year in the purchase of land for an entirely unnecessary public park, and this money, I maintain, could have been put to better use if used for the above purpose and other necessary work, such as repairing some of our streets, which in wet weather have as many pools as the seashore, after the ebbing tide. Writing of the public park, reminds me of the only public garden we possess in Wrexham, facing our only statue in the Guildhall Square. This, at the present time, contains a fine crop of weeds, empty bottles, general rubbish and old boots. Yours, etc." **RATEPAYER**

"Sir, Is it not time our Health Authority took steps to remove that horrible nuisance (miscalled "convenience") in Henblas Street, at the side of one of the entrances to the Butter Market. The stench coming from the place at all hours of the day and night is abominable and cannot but have a most injurious effect on the butter and other dairy produce sold in the market. The Sanitary Inspector must have lost his sense of smell if he can't find a nuisance there. Yours, etc." **INQUIRER**

The Corporation Jubilee – Holiday Arrangements

17th August 1907

A meeting of the Committee appointed to deal with the celebration of the Jubilee of the Corporation was held at the Guildhall on Thursday evening, under the presidency of the Mayor, Councillor Edward Hughes.

It was decided that the celebration shall take place on Friday 27th of September next.

The Town Clerk was instructed to write to the Traders' Association with a view to arranging for the shops to be closed the whole of that day and it was decided that the managers of the various schools should be approached as to closing the schools on that day.

A Sub-Committee was appointed to draw up an appeal for funds and Mr. W Acton and Mr. J W Rogers were appointed secretaries.

The Corporation Jubilee – A Town's Meeting

17th August 1907

A town's meeting was convened at the Lecture Rooms of the Free Library on Monday evening. His Worship the Mayor (Councillor Edward Hughes) presided over a large attendance.

In his opening remarks, the Mayor explained that the Town Council at their Committee meeting decided to celebrate in some form, the Jubilee of the Corporation of the Borough and he thought that decision had met with the general approval of the inhabitants of the town. The Committee, however, felt that they should like an expression of opinion from the townsmen as to what form the celebrations should take. In order to assist them in arriving at a decision, the Council had made certain suggestions, which he would ask the Town Clerk to read. If the suggestions were adopted they would have something to work upon.

Suggestions for the Meeting:

- That the celebrations should take place on Tuesday 3rd September, or on the following Friday.

- That in the event of Tuesday being selected, the tradespeople of the town be requested to consider the desirability of closing their business establishments at noon, and, if Friday, to close the whole of the day.
- That the Education Committee be recommended to grant a day's holiday.
- That the Mayor and Corporation, and the inhabitants, attend Divine Service at the Parish Church and that a collection be taken towards defraying the cost of repairing the belfry of the Parish Church, and
- That an open air treat be given to all the children in the borough and to the children of the Union and that each child be presented with a medal to commemorate the event.

The motion was put to the meeting and carried without a dissention. Alderman Thomas Jones was of the opinion that it would be advantageous if the celebrations were thrown back until the end of September, upon ground as near as possible to each of the four wards. Mr. Rowlands reminded Mr. Paddon that his proposal convened a park and recreation ground. Mr. Paddon responded that he would support this resolution.

Mr. Thomas Bury said he was present with the sole intention of listening, but he could not refrain from expressing a few words. He had to confess that he was very much convinced with what Mr. Rowlands and the other speakers had said in advocacy of a fund being commenced for the object of the proposal, but he should just like to point out one or two difficulties. A suggestion had been made that there should be a recreation ground for the four wards of the town. That was a doubtful idea. When the Corporation went to ask a landlord for the purchase or rental of a piece of land for recreation purposes, they were met with a refusal. Here the children were allowed freedom of action and speech and it was unlikely that the tenants of the houses in that vicinity would tolerate such a thing without the children being under control. The grounds in Bellevue when opened would be subject to some regulation, which he thought was absolutely necessary. Here was an opportunity for them to put the ground in order, not merely for the residents, but a portion of it as a recreation ground for children. If the Corporation had not availed

themselves of the opportunity of acquiring this open space, the chances of a public park would have been lost forever. The Town Council had always done their very best and they should now mark the memory of the Incorporation of the borough in the manner it had been proposed by helping the Corporation to provide a fund, which would be exquisite. He did not think a more worthy object could be conceived, and he would give it his best support.

Proposal to Layout Parkey Fields

Mr. L B Rowlands said that he had quite a different proposal to make than what had been suggested. He would suggest that they should celebrate it in such a manner that not only themselves, but generations to come would point to it as indicating benefits. Some time ago the Corporation purchased the Parkey Fields with the object of some day providing the town with a public park and recreation ground. It was extremely unlikely that the Corporation would be able to carry out that project considering the present state of their finances and the already over-burdened ratepayer. His proposal was as follows:

“That a fund be raised by public subscription for the laying out, etc., of the Parkey fields as a public park and recreation ground in order to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Borough.”

And that a Committee should be formed as representative as possible to work in conjunction with the Parks Committee of the Town Council.

Mr W Aston, in supporting the resolution said, for a long period they had been anxious to see a park in Wrexham, and, personally, he was delighted when the Council decided to acquire the land. The park and open spaces would bring the people in touch with nature, and would not only provide public entertainment, but would afford many benefits. They would make the people healthier.

Mr. L H Rowlands agreed to accompany in his resolution all the suggestions, except those, which involved any expenditure of

money. The motion was then put to the meeting and unanimously carried.

Police News – Wrexham Borough – various petty crimes

24th August 1907

Drunk & Disorderly

PC W Evans charged Thomas Wainwright of Wrexham with being drunk and disorderly on Saturday and the defendant was sentenced to 14 days hard labour.

Collecting a Crowd

PC Jeffries deposed that at 9.20pm on Saturday evening he was on duty in Brook Street and found the defendant, Harriet Booth, shouting and brawling, thereby causing a crowd to collect. He asked her to go away and she said she would go to Marchwiell, but later repeated the conduct. Defendant was fined 1s and costs.

Drunk in Charge of Horses

PC ME Roberts charged John Roberts of Holt Street, Wrexham, with being drunk in charge of two horses. The officer said that at 6.00pm on Tuesday he was on duty in High Street when he was informed that there was a man drunk while in charge of two horses on the Kings Mills Road. He proceeded there and saw the defendant sitting on the shafts of the lurry. He took the defendant home, and left him in charge of his wife, whilst some other man took care of the lurry and horses. Defendant was charged 5s and costs 7s 6d.

Begging

PC J Glen charged Elizabeth Edwards of Wrexham with begging. The officer deposed that at 7.15pm on Saturday he saw the defendant accosting several gentlemen, showing them a card, and evidently asking for assistance. He followed her along Hope Street and down Henblas Street where she repeated the offence. He afterwards took her into custody and while on the way to the

County Buildings she became very violent. Defendant was fined 1s and costs 3s 6d.

Drunk

PC Thomas Davies charged Samuel Rowe Thomas of Bunkers Hill, Bersham, with being drunk in Abbot Street at 9.30pm on Saturday. The officer said that the defendant was sleeping in a doorway, helplessly drunk, and he had to get assistance to take defendant to the County Buildings. Defendant was fined 5s and costs, or in default seven days imprisonment.

Drunk

PC J Jones charged John Wood of Wrexham with being drunk and disorderly at 10.15pm on Sunday near the Wynnstay Arms. The officer said he asked the defendant for his name and address, but defendant said he "had not got one". He later gave the name of Williams and became very disorderly. Defendant was fined 2s 6d and costs.

Munificent Gift to Wrexham – Recreation Ground for Rhosddu

24th August 1907

BENEFICENCE OF A LOCAL GENTLEMAN.

Through the generosity of Mr. John Jones of Grove Lodge, Wrexham, the Corporation, on behalf of the inhabitants, are to be presented with a piece of land at Rhosddu, for the purpose of establishing a recreation ground.

On Tuesday morning, his Worship the Mayor (Councillor Edward Hughes) received a letter of which the following is a copy from Mr. John Jones

"Dear Mr Mayor, I have wished for some time to give effect to a desire which my late brother and I had formed, to offer for the acceptance of the Wrexham Corporation, the land and garden ground in Garden Road, Rhosddu, shown on the enclosed plan, for

the use in perpetuity as a recreation ground. I have included the small detached piece of garden ground, with the view that this might be sold, and the proceeds applied towards fencing and improving the grounds, and as it is my wish that the ratepayers should not be put to any expense by accepting this gift. I propose to accompany it with my cheque for £350, which I hope will defray the rest of the cost of fencing and preparing the ground. I should like this gift to be associated with the name and memory of my late brother and with this end, I trust the Corporation will consent to its being named, "The William Jones Recreation Ground".

The Mayor thereupon convened a special meeting of the Council for the purpose of fully considering the proposal in committee. It was unanimously resolved and the motion of the Mayor seconded by committee "That the best thanks of the Council be tendered to Mr John Jones for his gift, and that he be informed that the Council gratefully accept the same and agree to the conditions mentioned."

The total area of the land, intended to be conveyed to the Corporation, is 13,270 sq yards, in four plots, and it's estimated value is £1,650. With the donation kindly promised by Mr Jones, the money value of the bequest is, therefore, about £2000.

United Westminster & Wrexham Collieries – A New Colliery

9th November 1907

An important development in local colliery matters was inaugurated at Acton Grange, near the main Great Western Railway line, when the sod-cutting ceremony of the colliery acquired by the United Westminster and Wrexham Collieries Limited, was performed.

The guests were conveyed from the Great Western Railway Station to the site in two special rails motor-cars.

Mr R T Wickham, one of the directors, said it was his privilege to see the commencement of the sinking of the colliery at last. Their predecessors would have been very pleased to have been there that day and see their hopes realised.

He would call upon Mr Fraser to present a spade to Sir Theodore Martin and ask him to cut the first sod of the new United Westminster and Wrexham Colliery, and Mr H H Ross to present a similar spade to Mrs H Dyke Dennis, the wife of their managing director.

Sir Foster Cunliffe thanked Sir Theodore Martin and Mrs Dyke Dennis saying he was very glad to see that operation accomplished.

After the ceremony the guests proceeded to the Wrexham and Acton Colliery, where luncheon was served, and toasts were honoured.

Theft of Rabbit Skins

16th November 1907

At the Wrexham Borough Police Court yesterday, Richard Stanley Williams aged 13 from Lorne Street, Wrexham and John Prytherch aged 12 from Crispin Lane, Wrexham, were charged on remand with stealing 34 rabbit skins, valued at 5s, the property of Charlotte Willcock, fruiterer of Yorke Street, Wrexham.

The complainant stated that their warehouse in Manley Road was safely secured on the Saturday night previous, but on the following Monday they found an entrance had been effected through the roof and 34 rabbit skins were missing. They had then contacted the police.

PC J L Williams stated that he received information of the missing skins on Tuesday. He made inquiries, visited the Rhosddu Council Schools on the Wednesday morning where he saw Williams and, in the presence of his schoolmaster, asked him to account for the

rabbit skins which he had in his possession. In reply he said a lad named Prytherch went with him to a shed in Manley Road, they climbed over the wall and Prytherch took a few slates off the roof and got the skins. Williams was then taken to the County Buildings.

PC Williams then went in search of Prytherch, found him in Crispin Lane and asked him to account for the rabbit skins he had sold to a man named Harry Williams, Abbots Street, the previous Saturday night. In reply he made a similar statement to Williams, adding that the roof gave way and he (Prytherch) had fallen through the roof and hurt his head. He further said he took the skins to Williams in Abbot Street and sold them to him, telling him that he had them from a man in the market.

Harry Williams, general dealer, Abbot Street said that at 7.30pm the previous Saturday evening, Prytherch came to his house and offered the skins for sale. He asked them if they had got them by honest means, when Prytherch replied "I have been working for a man in the market and he gave me these skins instead of money."

The Chairman: "Did it not strike you that two dozen and ten skins was a large number for a boy to be in possession of on a Saturday night?"

Harry Williams: "I did think so for a moment, but he assured me they had got them honestly."

Inspector Tippett said that the defendant Richard Stanley Williams was similarly charged at Llangollen sometime ago, when he was birched. His school record was very bad. There was nothing against Prytherch whose school record was fair.

After a lengthy deliberation, the Chairman said the defendant Williams would be sent to Shrewsbury for 7 days and afterwards would be committed to a reformatory for 4 years. Prytherch would receive six strokes with the birch rod.

Wrexham Woman Fined for Assault

7th December 1907

At Chester on Friday, Mary Pilling, Beast Market, Wrexham, was summoned for using obscene language on the 28th November, and further with assaulting John Hughes on 30th November.

Hughes stated that on the 30th November he was in the Royal Oak Inn, when a bothers arose with Mrs Pilling about some singing. Without any provocation the defendant struck him over the eye with a spittoon.

Defendant: "Didn't someone hit my husband with a porter bottle on the back of the head and split it open?"

Witness: "I don't know."

Another witness, named Morning Dew, said the bother arose during the singing of a song called "Any old thing will do".

During the struggle, Mrs Pilling got hold of Hughes' muffler until he 'grasped' for breath.

The defendant was fined 5s and costs for the first offence, and 10s and costs for the assault.

District Intelligence

19th January 1907

Bwlchgwyn

Lovers of music will be glad to learn that a male voice choir is to be formed in this village. Mr William Roberts, Old Road, has been appointed conductor, and rehearsals will shortly be commenced. The choir will contest at the forthcoming eisteddfod.

Holt & Farndon

Complaints are heard of certain persons from Wrexham coming to Farndon and Holt on Sundays to sell the "Sunday Chronicle" and other newspapers. Members of the Free Church Council have been asked to pass a resolution condemning the sale of such papers on the Lord's day.

2nd February 1907

Acrefair

The weekly meeting was held on Thursday night. Mr Thomas Hughes presided and gave a stirring address. A long programme was gone through sustained by Mrs Parry, Miss Bowen, Miss Newton, Miss E Jones, Miss Orange, Miss M O Parry, Messrs W Parry, S Powell and B Davies. Recitations were given by Norman Cheshire, Dorothy Griffiths, Elsie Southwell, Chrissy Evans, Hannah Roberts, Clifford Parry, a party of boys and a party of girls. A temperance dialogue was given by Misses Amy and Tamar Owens and Messrs Thomas Powell and R Newton. There was a full attendance.

16th February 1907

Cefn Mawr

Sion Literary Society met on Monday evening in Cefn. A lively debate took place on the subject "Should the Church be disestablished?". Mr E Berwyn Williams opened in favour of Disestablishment, supported by Messrs Mesach Roberts and J T Jones. The negative side was taken by Mr William Owens, supported by Messrs William Burgess, Stephen Jones and Simon Richards, and at the close 67 voted in favour of Disestablishment and 11 against it. Alderman Christmas Jones presided.

9th March 1907

Coedpoeth

Considerable excitement was caused in this village on Sunday evening about seven o'clock, when a man paraded High Street shouting at the top of his voice "Prepare, prepare to meet your God!". The shouting was heard from some distance, and brought flocks of people to the main street. This occurred whilst services were being held at the churches, and the congregation were rather startled at the cries. The man said he came from Rhos, and had been commanded by the Divine Spirit to announce his message. He made his way for Minera, still shouting.

13th April 1907

Ruabon

A well attended lantern lecture was given at the Catholic Methodist Chapel on Wednesday evening by the Rev R J Jones on his "Visit to Patagonia" (The Welsh Colony). Several patriotic songs of the Colony were sung by Miss Nellie Thomas (of Patagonia). The Rev W Pandy Thomas presided. The lanternist was Mr Jonathon Edwards of Cefn Mawr, who attended in the absence of Mr Culey of Trevor Isa, through the illness of Mrs Culey. Sympathy was expressed with Mrs Culey and her husband. The proceeds were in aid of the new Chapel funds.

4th May 1907

Holt & Farndon

Weights & Measures

Mr N Price, Inspector of Weights & Measures, and his assistant have been engaged at Holt most of the week testing, adjusting, and stamping scales, weights, etc.

Typhoid Fever

A case of typhoid fever occurred in Wrexham Road, midway between Holt and Glanypwll, on Wednesday week and the patient was removed in the ambulance to the Fever Hospital at Wrexham. The disease is of a very mild type.

Motor Car Speed

The many private motorcars driven through Holt proceed much more slowly now complaints have been publicly made, and there is now less dust and less danger. Possibly, also, the speed was moderated in order that the occupants might view the beautiful sights presented on both sides of the main road by the damson blossoms.

Public Houses and Sunday Closing

It is stated that in the village of Farndon, in Cheshire, a good deal of drinking takes place on Sunday, during the summer months and while the fruit season lasts. While at Holt, in Wales, the public houses are all closed on Sundays. At Farndon they are opened during parts of the day. In view of the forthcoming season, a feeling is growing that the houses ought also be closed in Farndon.

Ruabon

Fowl Stealing

At a special police court on Tuesday, George Hamblett, New Hall View, was charged with stealing fowl, the property of Richard

Evans, Afongoch. Accused was found guilty and sentenced to two months imprisonment with hard labour.

14th December 1907

Ponkey

The Congo Atrocities

On Wednesday evening, a crowded meeting was held in the Mynydd Seion Chapel, Ponkey, to protest against the continued misrule in the Congo Free State.

The Rev Daniel Hughes was called upon to deliver his lecture on the Congo question. He detailed the history of the land showing how King Leopold had been appointed overseer in Congo by the powers signatory to the Berlin treaty, and then came to a heartrending detailing of some of the atrocities that are being perpetrated in order to force the natives to procure rubber to satisfy the greed of Belgian exploiters.

Mr Hughes showed how international peace between white and black races was being imperilled and that the legal right we have as signatory to the treaty should be exercised to save the world from bloodshed. He appealed to the moral standards that exalt a nation and sincerely hoped that Britishers would be second to none in their eagerness to right this great wrong.

A resolution was proposed by Rev T Arthur Thomas, Congregational Church, Johnstown, in these terms "That we record our horror at the atrocities that continue to be perpetrated on the Congo, and hereby call upon our Government to exercise its power by treaty rights to bring this lamentable state of affairs speedily to an end."

