

PENZANCE BRITISH LEGION

NEW CLUB OPENED

Scores of ex-Servicemen, together with younger people for whom the war has less reality, were *present* at the opening of the new club headquarters of Penzance branch of the British Legion on Saturday afternoon. The fact that it was the eve of Remembrance Day made the occasion one of particular good-fellowship, mingled with poignancy.

Penzance branch now has probably the finest club in Cornwall. The premises, which once formed the Chapel-street residence of Mr. W. Colenso, a former Mayor of Penzance, have been entirely reconditioned and adapted to the requirements of the legionnaires. There are about fifteen rooms in the building, including a large entrance hall, with a marble floor, a bar, a comfortable bar parlour, and a billiard room. The furnishing is not yet complete, but the rooms in use at present are tastefully appointed and lack the severity to be found in many institutions of the kind. A cheerful colour scheme has been adhered to, and the architectural alterations are a credit to Mr. Geoffrey Bazeley, the architect, and Mr. H. Rogers, the builder. Particularly remarkable is the imposing main staircase with its stained-glass window.

Col. W. L. Harvey (president) performed the opening ceremony.

Introducing Col. W. L. Harvey, Mr. W. J. Hichens said that it was very appropriate that the branch should enter the new club on the eve of *Remembrance* Day, when the sacrifices and needs of ex-Servicemen and the work of the Legion were impressively before the public. He expressed the thanks of the branch to Mr. J. B. Treglown, who had helped them to acquire the premises, to Mr. W. Colenso, who had cordially welcomed them into his old home, to Mr. G. Bazeley, who had given them what they wanted *at* a minimum of cost, to Mr. H. Rogers who had also been very generous ; to Col. E. H. W. Bolitho, of Trengwainton, who had *studied* their wishes and desires ; to Mr. W. G. Goodfellow, C.A., who had established harmony between the civic authorities and the Legion and to Mr. J. H. Nicholas, the assistant town clerk, for his services.

The scheme had cost about £2,000. It was not the result of a sudden idea, but had been developing for fourteen years, under the direction of Mr. J. I. Roberts. They had not entered the premises free of debt, but they hoped to be clear of debt within a few years. Many of the members themselves—especially the unemployed ones—had assisted with the reconditioning, Mr. M. J. Kenna and Mr. C. Delabertouche being particularly useful. In the near future they hoped to introduce a fully-equipped women's section, with facilities that would simplify the distribution of poppies to the sellers on Remembrance Day.

On behalf of the branch Mr. Hichens presented Col. Harvey with a silver tankard, as a token of gratitude for the services he had rendered. Mr. Hichens remarked that they were proud and fortunate to have Col. Harvey as their president. They were deeply conscious of his interest in the welfare of ex-Servicemen in the district.

Col. Harvey said that he was very much surprised both at being asked to open the headquarters and at receiving the presentation. He thought that the branch had one of the finest and most useful buildings in Penzance, a building worthy of the British Legion. They should be very thankful to Mr. Colenso for his help. He thanked them sincerely for the presentation, and had pleasure in declaring the building open.

The gathering joined in the singing of "For he's a jolly good fellow," and Col. Harvey was accorded three cheers.

Mr. J. I. Roberts thanked the colonel for his services that day and in the past.

In the absence of Rev. E. Vernon Shaw (chaplain of the Legion), Canon F. R. Carr blessed the new Legion *banner* and said, referring to the song "Tipperary," which had been sung at the start of the proceedings, that he hailed from Tipperary, though when he was padre in the war the men would not believe that such a place actually existed.

Mr. Percy Barton (South-Western area secretary) remarked that during the past few years the British Legion had been subjected to criticism with regard to the conduct of the clubs. He believed that the vast majority of clubs throughout the country were well run, and that in Penzance the premises would be used as they should be.

Among those present were Brig.-Gen. W. S. Rogers, Major N. C. *Richards*, and Ald. Robt. Thomas (Deputy Mayor).

The Mayor and Mayoress (Ald. And Mrs. C. Tregenza) were unable to be present, together with the retiring Mayor and Mayoress (Ald. and Mrs. J. W. Meek).

Transcribed from The Cornishman, 15th November 1934