



A newspaper article displayed in the Octopus Centre, Barby Road, Rugby

The Advertiser, Saturday July 19 1884

THE HOSPITAL OF ST CROSS

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

OPENING CEREMONY

When the unpretentious cottage hospital in Pennington Street was started some years ago by the Christian charity of Miss Nicholson, and fostered by Mr. J. A. Campbell, Mr. J. M. Wilson and Mr. F. Fuller – who were thorough and consistent friends throughout – the first-named honoured gentleman could not in his brightest hopes for its success have imagined it would be the forerunner of the complete and handsome institution which, through the munificence of Mr. and Mrs. RH wood, of Penrose House, Rugby now stands on the Barby Road, the pride and ornament of the town. There are many who remember how that little institution developed its sphere of usefulness, until public exigencies made it necessary for removal to larger premises. Through Mr. Campbell's instrumentality the large building formerly used as a school for the deaf and dumb was acquired, a portion of which was used for the 'Nursing Home', as it was then called, and the remainder for various philanthropical purposes, by which Mr. Campbell tried to advance the social and intellectual

condition of his poorer fellow townsmen. By degrees, the whole of the building was absorbed, the medical staff, which had been of limited character, was extended, and ultimately the institution was designated 'The Rugby Hospital'. Nor did it in a medical point of view belie its name, for cases of accident and illness were successfully treated there, which in former days would have been sent to Birmingham or London, the patients more often than not dying before they got there. A spacious ward, called the Campbell Ward, was added, enabling the patients in other rooms to have more space, and by purchasing and demolishing some adjoining cottages a good open garden for convalescents was secured. Notwithstanding these improvements, there was the unfortunate fact that the building was old and inconvenient, and being surrounded by buildings - some of them of an un-inviting if not insanitary character – the medical skill was working at a disadvantage. But the struggle to obtain this solatium¹ had been hampered with [*dying?*] difficulties, and this goal had only been reached after years of careful financing and finessing. To look for anything better was of course out of the question, and, moreover, in the minds of some, all that Rugby required in the way of hospital accommodation was centred in the Castle Street Institution. The difficulty was, however, solved by Mr. and Mrs. Wood who came as strangers to Rugby only a few years ago, but, possessed of feelings intensely humane, and blessed with the means to gratify the dictates of those emotions. They saw that suffering humanity and medical science would be materially aided by removal to a site where the greatest physician of all – Nature – could exercise its healing influence more powerfully. The thought was father to the resolve, and the provision of a building which should be free from unhealthy surroundings, and which should embody all the conditions essential to perfect ventilation and sanitation, and scientific convenience, became the object of their solicitude. Mr. Wood had already become the owner of an estate on the Barby Road, and a portion of this sloping to the south, open to the breezes from that quarter and sheltered from those from the north, was fixed upon as the place for the ideal building, and nowhere round Rugby could a more desirable be found. These good intentions were, however, through a misunderstanding, which need not be further alluded to, doomed to be unproclaimed to the town, but eventually, through the instrumentality of an esteemed resident – Mr. FitzRoy – they were made known and the inhabitants were overwhelmed with astonishment and gratification at the announcement of this munificent offer. Ere the town had recovered from its surprise at the immensity of the gift, and the universal feeling of gratulation had calmed down, a trust deed was executed, a contract was entered into with Messrs. Parnell and Son, and the building was commenced. It was given out that the building was to cost £10,000, the site and tenancies to go with it was valued at £5,000 and, to help in maintaining it afterwards, an endowment of £10,000 was added. The trust deed provides that no building shall ever be erected on any part of the land, except for hospital purposes, and in making this stipulation Mr. Wood had in view not only the requirements of the institution, but the probability that Rugby might in time extend in that direction, and there would always be an open space there, however thickly populated other parts might be. By endowing it with £10,000 Mr. Wood did not in the least intend to relieve the town of the responsibility it had already taken upon itself to support a hospital, but to ensure an income which should be first devoted to keeping the hospital and its grounds in good order and repair. The trust deed was signed on April 6th 1882², and the foundation stone was laid privately, by Mr. and Mrs. Wood on the 9th December following. The work was pushed on with vigour, and has

¹ Compensation for injured feelings as distinct from financial loss or physical suffering

² A further Indenture was 'made the 27th of July 1882' and bears an official stamp dated 29.7.82 at a cost of £25 and 10 shillings. This gifted £10,000 for the initial running of the hospital.

been completed within a month or two of the time originally fixed; and Thursday last was the chosen day for the opening ceremony.

The trustees under the deed are Lord Denbigh, Rev. J. Murray, Rev. T. W. Jex-Blake, D.D., Rev. Canon Dixon, D.D., Rev W.H. Benn, Col. Caldecott, Mr. A. Boughton Leigh and Mr. T.M. Wratishaw.

At a meeting in the Council Room of the old hospital last week, the council for the new hospital was appointed. Messrs. F. Fuller, H.T. Gillson, R.S. Lee, George Loverock, C. Hall and A.L. Mumford were re-elected. Mr. Wood nominated the Rev. W.H. Benn, Messrs. H.W. Bucknill and J.Parnell, jun., who were duly appointed and the Rev. J. Murray, Mr. J.W. Vecqueray, and Mr. A.J. Lawrence were also added. The Rev. W.H. Benn was elected chairman of the Council and Mr. A.J. Lawrence undertook the duties of honorary secretary *pro tem*.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

The Hospital of St Cross has been built from the designs of Mr. Henry Wilson, of Grays Inn Square, London, and is intended to accommodate 31 patients. It is situated on an elevated site, ten acres in extent on the east of Barby Road.

The building, of red brick with *[black]* stone dressings, and roofed with green Westmoreland slates, is in the late domestic Gothic style. It is approached from the high road by a private drive, and the grounds are entered by gates leading into a courtyard. From whatever point the structure is viewed it presents a most pleasing contour – and this is especially the case when the observer takes his stand on the Barby Road, at any spot from whence the hospital can be seen. One is struck with the substantial and imposing appearance presented, while the admirable grouping of many handsome windows and the free use of stone dressings, gives a degree of lightness and elegance seldom attained in public buildings.

The main entrance is from a covered open-timbered carriage porch, of very handsome proportions, which opens direct into the entrance hall. On the right of this, and seen through arches, is the principal staircase, rising by easy stone steps to the first floor, the staircase having a light iron balustrade. Over the central arch in the hall a marble tablet records the date of the foundation in the following words:-

Anno ab incarnation Domini MDCCCLXXXII.
Constructum est istud aedificium
Hospitalis Sanctae Crucis
Ricardus Henricus Wood et Elizabetha
?uxor ejusdem Fundatores³

On the east side of the hall, over the fireplace, is a tablet on which is inscribed the names of the benefactors of the hospital, and which we hope may soon require to be enlarged. From the hall a wide corridor conducts us east and west, and on the north side are arranged the principal rooms for the administration – i.e., rooms for house surgeon, matron, committee and nurses. The operating room is on the north side, and is in convenient proximity to the accident ward. It is well lighted and

³ The year of incarnation of our Lord 1882. This building was constructed Holy Cross Hospital Richard Henry and Elizabeth Wood Founders.

fitted with all the requisite appliances, and with hot and cold water. At the west end of the corridor are the men's convalescent room and the out-patients department. This latter has its door nearest to the entrance gates, over which is carved the ancient motto 'post tenobras spero lucem'⁴ and consists of a spacious waiting room with an arrangement of seats by which all crowding and pushing is avoided, and by which means every patient is sure of reaching the doctor in his proper turn. The out patients leave the consulting room by another gangway, passing the dispensary on their way out. On the south side of the main corridor are the two pavilions, containing the principal wards. These project from the main block at right angles, and have a free circulation of air around three sides. Each pavilion consists of two wards one on the ground floor and one above, it being intended, when the hospital is at its full strength, that the ground floor shall be kept entirely for men, and the upper floor for women. Each of the four principal wards (which are all exactly alike in arrangement) is constructed for seven patients. They are lofty apartments, each being complete in itself, being provided with a bathroom and lavatory, a nurses scullery fitted with range, dresser, hot and cold water, and [filter]; and also with a w.c. and slop sink, placed in the tower at the south end, and being cut off from the wards by a lobby, having large windows for cross ventilation. The wards are heated by large grates, having a supply of fresh warmed air supplied at the back, and this is supplemented by hot water coils, the cases of which are to easily remove for cleaning, and which also have fresh air supplied at the back. The vitiated air is removed by ventilators near the ceiling, which leads to the two turrets on the roof. The floors are of oak, wax polished, and all angles are rounded to prevent the lodgement of dust. On the first floor, besides the women's convalescent room and bedrooms for the house surgeon and matron, linen room and waterproof store, are two small wards containing one and two rooms respectively.⁵ These are shut off from the main corridor by a swing door, and are intended for the isolation of certain cases. They are provided with sink, etc., cut off by a ventilated lobby. On the top floor ample provision is made for nurse and servants, and rooms are arranged for a man close to the house surgeon's bedroom, and approached by a separate staircase. At the east end of the main corridor on the ground floor is a covered walk, which faces due south, and is protected from cold winds. This walk is on a level with the ground floor so that patients can be wheeled out in their beds, should they be unable to walk, without any difficulty. The kitchen and laundry occupy a separate block at the end of the building being cut off by a passage, so that no smells of cooking, &c., can get to the portion occupied by the patients. The block contains a lofty kitchen with larders and scullery, and a wash-house on the ground floor with troughs, copper, and separate hot water service. On the upper floor is a laundry with drying closet. At the end of the covered walk, and cut off from it, is the mortuary, which is fitted with the necessary conveniences for *post mortem* examinations. The basement floor contains the usual store-rooms, coal cellar, meter room, and the warming apparatus.

Throughout the building the most complete means have been taken to secure thorough ventilation and plenty of light, while every care is taken to provide for the due comfort of the patients. In the wards the windows and ventilators are arranged to open so as to give the air free course round the room, at the same time to prevent draughts upon the patients. The internal sanitary arrangements are so devised that the most perfect cleanliness can be secured, white glaze bricks being used for the walls, and tiles for the floors, while the water fittings are of the most approved kind, and are waste-

⁴ Light After Darkness

⁵ End of column 1!

preventing. Although artificial warmth is generally supplied by hot water pipes, the patients and officials will not be deprived of the "cheerful hearth," all the wards and most of the rooms having fire-places, with suitable chimney pieces and ornamented with tiles. All the exposed internal woodwork is of varnished pitch pine or [*deal*], except the kitchen and laundry offices where it is painted stone colour. A cheerful tone is given to the light admitted through the numerous windows by a judicious intermingling of lightly tinted glass; and the three top lights of the fine south window of the main staircases are filled in with the coats of arms of the respective families of Mr. and Mrs. Wood (Wood and Hatton), and the badge of St. Cross – a croes potent, the motto being "sub hoc signo vinces"⁶. The latter badge is also skilfully worked in at several points inside and out of the building. The ground floor of the entrance hall and corridors of the ground floor are paved with red and black tiles, while the upper passages are laid with linoleum. The bell communication is by the ordinary crank system, and speaking tubes proceed from the wards to the passage near the kitchen; and an easily worked lift passes from the basement to roof for the convenience of food, stores, &c.

It was the original intention of Mr. Wood to leave the furnishing of the hospital to the town, but the wish did not become known, and consequently no steps were taken. A sum of about £600 having, however, accumulated upon the endowment fund, Mr Wood decided to apply that as far as it would go in purchasing furniture. The ward beds will be uniform throughout, the bedsteads being of substantial iron, painted chocolate, with the usual fittings to enable patients to raise themselves in bed, having Charlton and Dugdale's patent excelsior wire spring mattresses. By the side of each bed will stand a polished pitch pine locker for the use of the patients, and which can also be used as seats by visitors. The whole of the crockery will be of uniform pattern and will bear the badge of St Cross.

The drainage is arranged according to the latest ideas on sanitation, all sinks, baths &c., being disconnected. The foul drains are laid in perfectly straight lines, a large brick manhole being placed wherever a bend occurs, and the drains running through these manholes in half or channel pipes, and any stoppage or defect can be immediately found out and rectified. The rainwater finds its way by downspouts to Doulton gullies at the base of the building, and a portion of it then goes to a cistern in the yard, the remainder passing away to the water course in the Barby Road. The foul drainage falls by the above-mentioned system to a filtering tank at the bottom of the field in front, where it will be thoroughly and effectually dealt with. Provision is made in case of fire by hydrants outside the building and by taps, to which hose can be attached, opposite the door of each ward, these being supplied direct from the town main.

The works have been satisfactorily carried out by Messrs. Parnell. Mr. S. T. Fletcher was Clerk of the Works.

Only a small portion of the ten acres of land given with the hospital has been laid out, and that merely as a grass covered terrace with gravel paths, wherein the convalescents can seek fresh air and exercise. The remainder of the land will be grazed, it being considered undesirable that the income should at present be burdened with the cost of keeping up an elaborate garden.

⁶ Under this sign you will conquer

THE OPENING

Shortly before one o'clock – the time fixed for this – the most important event of the day, the band of the 4th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment played down to the hospital, and presently the Town and School Rifle Volunteers, officered by Capts. Seabroke and Collins, and Lieuts. Over and Hodges, arrived, headed by the Steam Shed Band, and formed up with opened ranks between the gates and the principal entrance as a guard of honour. Around the carriage porch and in the hospital grounds a large assemblage, including most of the clergy and the principal residents in the neighbourhood, awaited the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Wood. On their coming they were received with a general salute by the Volunteers, and at the same time the bells of St. Marie's began ringing. They were accompanied to the door by Lord Leigh, Lord Denbigh, Miss Fitzroy. Mr. J. A. Darlington, Mrs. Darlington, and Mr. P. A. Muntz, M.P. and Mrs Muntz. Mrs. Wood was immediately presented by Miss Hermione de Trafford and Miss Florie Dukes with a very large bouquet sent by the Hon. Mrs. Tower and Mrs. de Trafford. It consisted of the choicest white flowers and maiden hair ferns, marked with a cross of crimson roses, and was made by Mr. W. Bryant, florist, North Street, Rugby. With the bouquet Miss Ethel Flint handed a card, upon which were these lines:-

Oh, lady, may these flowers show,
To thee our gratitude and love;
May Jesus bless thee thy bright crown above,
For this thy lasting work of love.

A key of solid gold designed by Mr. M. H. Bloxam, F.S.A⁷, and worked by Mr. Robinson, High Street, was then handed to Mr. Wood. It bore the inscription:- "Presented by the ladies of Rugby and neighbourhood, to Richard Henry Wood, Esq., J.P., D.C.L.⁸, F.S.A., and Mrs. Elizabeth Wood, of Penrhos House⁹, Rugby, on the occasion of the opening of his munificent gift, the Hospital of St Cross, Rugby, July 17th 1884." With this key Mr. Wood unlocked and opened the doors, and in turning to the Rev. C. Elsee, who was present in his capacity as Chairman of the Local Board of Health, declared the hospital open and that he handed it over for the use of the town. Addressing the assemblage, Mr. Elsee said: Mr. Wood has just handed over to me in the name of the town this hospital, and has opened the door of it. I am sure that I am only expressing the feelings of all who are here, and in fact, of all who are in the town – if I say that we are deeply sensible of the liberality which has prompted him to make this great gift to the town, and that we do accept it most gratefully. I am sure you will join in the trust that this hospital may be a source of great benefit and

⁷ F.S.A. Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries - Fellows are elected by existing members of the Society, and to be elected persons shall be 'excelling in the knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other nations' and be 'desirous to promote the honour, business and emoluments of the Society'.

Source http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society_of_Antiquaries_of_London

⁸ D.C.L. Doctor of Civil Law is a degree offered by some universities, such as the [University of Oxford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Oxford), instead of the more common [Doctor of Laws](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_of_Laws) (LL.D.) degrees. The DCL is senior to all degrees save the [Doctor of Divinity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_of_Divinity) which was traditionally the highest degree bestowed by the Universities.

Source http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_of_Civil_Law

⁹ Penrhos House still stands in the grounds of Lawrence Sheriff School, on the corner of Moultrie Road and has recently become the Music Block

blessing to this town and neighbourhood, and that this door which Mr. Wood has now opened may never be closed against any case to which the misfortune of accident or illness shall give a claim of entrance, according to the wishes and intentions of the generous founders.

A short dedicatory service was then held. The Revs. J Murray (Rector), A. O. Tisdall, H. Vicars and H.T. Coney, together with the combined choirs of St Andrew's and Holy Trinity Churches, walked into the entrance hall. After the Rector had pronounced the words "Peace be to this house and that dwell in it", the choir commenced the hymn, "Thou to whom the sick and dying", and marched in procession, followed by the company, through the south door and by the gravel path round the east wing of the hospital, entering again by the covered walk, and proceeding to the east ward. Appropriate passages were intoned by the Rev. H. Vicars and the choir, and then the Rector offered up a special prayer. Then, chanting the 41st psalm, the procession continued to the west ward, where other passages were intoned and the Rector again offered up special prayers, one of which was as follows:- "Blessed be Thy name, O Lord, that it hath pleased Thee to put into the hearts of Thy servants Richard Henry and Elizabeth Wood to erect this house to Thy glory and to the relief of the sick and suffering: graciously vouchsafe to accept the work of their hands; remember them concerning this; wipe not out this kindness that they have shown for this house; and grant that all who shall enjoy the benefit of this pious work may show their thankfulness by making right use of it, to the glory of Thy blessed Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*" The opening ceremony having been concluded the band played "God save the Queen." The visitors, of whom there were a very large number, were for a time weather-bound in the hospital by a smart shower of rain; but the time was agreeably spent in looking over the building, and many inscribed their names in the visitors' book, Lord Leigh and Lord Denbigh being among the first to append their signatures. Donations to the amount of ¹⁰ £512 16s 6d,¹¹ were received, and upon the board containing the list of benefactors appeared the following:- W.S.H. FitzRoy, £100; Mrs Elizabeth Wood (Newbold Revel), £600; Miss Bucknill, £300; W.H. Benn £500.

THE LUNCHEON

As soon as the rain had ceased an adjournment was made to the Market Hall, where Mr. and Mrs. Wood entertained nearly five hundred residents to lunch, all classes coming together. The hall had been renovated for the occasion, and the tables when laid, were decorated by Mr. James Parker, of the Victoria Nurseries, Rugby, with admirable effect. Mr. E. Holey was entrusted with the serving of the luncheon, and it is needless to say he did it with his usual efficiency, although it was the largest assemblage of the kind ever seen in Rugby. The arrangements were placed by Mr. Wood in the hands of a committee of gentlemen, who performed their work well.

The head of the table was of course taken by Mr. R.H. Wood, and he was supported at the cross table by Mrs. Wood, Lord Leigh, Earl of Denbigh, Lord and Lady Braye, Major-General Tower, C.B., and the Hon. Mrs Tower, Miss FitzRoy, Mr. and Mrs. A. Boughton Leigh, Mr. and Mrs. Cunliffe Brooks, Dr. and Mrs. Jex-Blake, Mr. P.A. Muntz, M.P., Rev J. Murray (Rector of Rugby), Rev. C. Elsee (Chairman of the Local Board) and Mrs. Elsee, Mr. and Mrs. E.H. Wood, Mr. and Mrs. A.H. de

¹⁰ End of column 2!

¹¹ £512 82.5 pence

Trafford, Archdeacon Pownall (South Kilworth), Mrs Pennington, Dr. and Miss Dixon, Col. and Miss Caldecott, Rev. W.H. Benn, Mr. and Mrs. Darlington, Mr. H. Wilson, (the architect), Mr. J. Parnell (the builder), Mrs. Caldecott (Rugby). Among the guests were most of the members of the old Council, the medical staff, and a strong representation of the local clergy. Grace was said by the Rector, and during the luncheon the band of the 4th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, which was stationed in the corridor of the Hall, played a selection of music.

On rising to propose the health of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, the Chairman said: I have great pleasure in proposing that toast to this assembly as I know no place in Her Majesty's wide dominions where the hearts of her subjects beat more loyally than in the ancient town of Rugby (applause). The toast was loyally received, and the band played a strain of the National Anthem.

The Chairman then proposed the healths of "The Prince and Princess of Wales and the Rest of the Royal Family," and said they all knew how immensely indebted to His Royal Highness for the interest he took in all objects for the furtherance of the good of the people (loud applause). Musical honours were also accorded to this toast.

Mr. Cunliffe Brooks, next rising, said:- The honour of proposing the next toast has devolved upon me, and I rise the more readily because I can in an especial and two-fold manner join with you in the satisfaction that we have of witnessing the proceedings of today (applause). As a Rugby boy of the time of Dr. Arnold (applause), I see with immense interest the benefits that have been conferred upon the sojourn of my youth; and as having had the honour of knowing my friend Mr. Henry Wood from almost boyhood, it gives me an immense pleasure to see that the virtues of youth are developing themselves in a manner so useful to the country and to this neighbourhood (loud applause). But though we have seen so substantial an arrangement made for the good of those who may have the benefit of that hospital, yet we know that beyond the material and physical comforts that are prepared, we may look forward to a yet higher blessing being conferred upon that building, and upon the inmates, by the attention of those whom God has placed over us to teach and guide us in the ways of religion (applause). We are told, "Vain is the labour of those who build unless the Lord shall build the house," and great and zealous as will surely be the attentions that will be given by the committee and those attendant upon that hospital, yet we have the satisfaction of knowing that by the efforts of the Bishop and clergy of the diocese and the clergy of all denominations there shall be yet more gracious gifts sent to those who partake of the benefits of the hospital that Mr. Wood has so kindly founded. I give you the health of "The Bishop and the Clergy of the Diocese, and of all denominations," and coupled with it the name of Archdeacon Pownall. The toast was fittingly received, and in responding, Archdeacon Pownall said that when he was told he would be called upon to respond to the toast he could not help feeling that there was an incongruity in thus being called upon, because he laboured under the misfortune of not belonging to the diocese of Worcester. But as a not very distant neighbour of Rugby, he had that strong sympathy with the welfare of Rugby which they all felt, and on that ground he had a certain qualification; and yet, in replying to the toast, he felt something like the respectable churchwarden, who, when the congregation was in tears at an affecting charity sermon, declined to cry because he was the churchwarden of another parish (laughter). That was his feeling as an archdeacon of another diocese, and he admitted that it was wrong; but his second feeling was that the occasion upon which they had met was one which bound them altogether, one which put on one side entirely all

distinctions – ecclesiastical, political, or whatever they might be – and that one and all from whatsoever point they came, could unite in wishing God speed to this great work (applause). It had been so happily inaugurated, and whatever might separate them elsewhere, they were altogether on this point. And was it not true that this hospital which had been opened, not only united them, and appealed to the best and kindest, and noblest parts of our nature, but that it seemed to provide in one touch that which brought into contact the work of man with the work of the blessed angels. And, therefore, with this second feeling in his mind, they could quite understand why he could gladly avail himself of the opportunity which had been given him of returning thanks for the clergy of whatever denomination they might be, and especially the clergy of the diocese of Worcester (applause).

Lord Leigh, on rising to propose, “Success to the Hospital of St Cross” was warmly welcomed. He said:- Ever since Mr. Wood has lived amongst us we have always found good reason to be thankful that he has come to Warwickshire (applause). From the moment he came into the county Mr. Wood’s purse has been open to the poor, and we have this day had the pleasure of going over the work which he has just accomplished – a work which, I hope and trust, both he and Mrs Wood may long live to see the benefit of (loud applause). I don’t believe that anybody who wishes to do good to his fellow creatures can do it better than in the way in which Mr. Wood has acted; and when we know that that gentleman has laid out something more than £30,000¹² I think that this town and neighbourhood have reason to be grateful to him (loud applause). I can only, on the words of that beautiful prayer we have just heard, “thank God that He has put it into his heart to do so good a work.” I have been over many hospitals in my lifetime, but I do not think I even went over one so perfect as the one we have inspected today (applause). It is a magnificent structure and replete with every modern requirement that you can wish to find in a hospital. I give you with the greatest pleasure, “Long life to Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and long may they live to see the good work that they have done” (loud and continued cheers). Lord Leigh and Lord Denbigh then left the hall to attend the House of Lords.

Dr. Jex-Blake addressing the assembly said: I have been asked to second the expression of good wishes on behalf of Rugby and its neighbourhood for this new hospital (applause). I rise with the greatest pleasure, and I desire to do it in the heartiest and briefest way. People often say, “One half the world doesn’t know how the other half lives”. I am quite sure that one half of the world does not know how the other half suffers; and I think that of all the benefactors of our age and country none are greater than those who set themselves to diminish suffering (applause). They are doing a noble work, and they are distinctly followers of our Redeemer in that work. I have lived to see many changes in Rugby since I came here a little boy 40 years ago, but I have seen no change so great as the rearing of this beautiful building on its beautiful site, with its admirable internal arrangements – and all the gift of two people, who, really a few years ago, were strangers to this place (cheers). But Mr. and Mrs. Wood have long since ceased to be strangers. Mr. and Mrs. Wood are household names amongst us; and they will be still more endeared to coming generations (hear, hear). I hope that the work which that little hospital for a time gallantly and successfully did, will be carried on with ever increasing beneficence and success, and that the good intent of Mr. and Mrs. Wood, like

¹² According to <http://www.measuringworth.com/index.php> £30,000 in 1884 would become worth £2.65m based on changes in the retail price index or £13.3m based on average earnings in 2012

the good intent of Lawrence Sheriffe, will bear fruit for many centuries, and that many generations will rise up and call them blessed. I hope they will long live to see the work of their soul, and be satisfied, and to see a great and beneficent work going on upon a scale commensurate with the largeness of their hearts and the grandeur of their generosity (applause). I second most heartily the proposal of our excellent Lord Lieutenant of prosperity to the Rugby Hospital, and all gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Wood (loud applause). The toast was received, it is needless to say, with heartfelt and protracted cheering for Mr. and Mrs. Wood.

On rising to reply Mr. Wood was accorded another ovation. He said:- I rise to acknowledge and to thank Lord Leigh and Dr. Jex-Blake for the kind way in which they have mentioned Mrs. Wood's name and my own in connection with the hospital; and to thank you all for receiving it so warmly and so kindly. As regards the hospital, we believe that we have simply acknowledged our responsibility¹³ (hear, hear). There is no such thing in this world as perfect happiness, and this day, in the minds of many of us, there is a feeling of regret that those excellent persons who were instrumental in founding the first hospital for the town of Rugby, and for which Rugby will be forever indebted to them – I mean Miss Nicholson and Mr. Campbell (applause) – were not both of them spared to see the sapling they planted with such tender care grow into the goodly tree with a promise of abundant fruit. We hope that the hospital will bear the fruit that they would have wished it, and that in generations to come it will be the means of doing a vast amount of good amongst our suffering fellow creatures (applause). Beyond the medical cases which will be received and the many accidents that will occur from time to time, we trust it will be of great use as a convalescent hospital. There are so many poor men and women amongst us to whom the month's hospitality we hope we shall be in a position to offer them whenever we find them, and the month's entertainment we may set before them on visiting us, with pleasant surroundings and good living, and the skilful medical care they will receive from our excellent doctors, will be a great benefit, and we think that we shall be able to return them to their families with a new lease of life (loud and continued applause).

Mr. P.A. Muntz, M.P. was the next speaker and also met with a cordial reception. Before proceeding to propose the toast which had been put in his hands, Mr. Muntz said he should like to add his small testimony to the appreciation which he was sure was felt by everyone present of the noble gift that was bestowed by Mr. and Mrs. Wood upon the town and neighbourhood. It was indeed a glorious instance of that charity and that voluntary effort which abounds throughout the kingdom, and they all thoroughly and heartily appreciated the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Wood (applause). Mr. Muntz then went on to propose the health of "The council and medical staff of the hospital." Without the council, the hospital would be comparatively speaking, useless. It was absolutely essential for the proper management, organisation, and he need not tell the inhabitants of this good old town that the hospital in the past had been carried on in a thoroughly efficient manner (applause). Although they were indebted to the council, they were still more indebted to the medical staff – gentlemen who had studied hard and made themselves masters of the profession, and who, although there time was enormously called upon, gave away the fruits of their labours without recompense or reward for the benefit of the poor (cheers). He had no doubt the services of that staff would be transferred to the new hospital, and their work would be better than in the old building, because the new one was more fitted for the purpose, and that the town would be more indebted to them in the

¹³ End of column 3

future than in the past. With the toast he coupled the name of Mr. H. Lee-Warner, and it was received with all heartiness. In responding Mr. Lee-Warner first regretted that the chairman of the late board was not present to express his acknowledgement and to hear the kind way in which their little services in past years had been spoken of. All he could say was that the feelings of those who worked on the old board towards Mr. and Mrs. Wood were very much the feelings of children have towards their fairy godmothers. Mr. and Mrs. Wood had come in, and, seeing the laborious economy and hard saving by which the council had tried to heap together and make an institution worthy of the town, had supplied them with the means to start in an entirely different manner of life, and they now only asked the inhabitants of Rugby to support them in their well meant and splendidly executed operations. When he thought of the small way in which Miss Nicholson (whom he was delighted to see present enjoying this moment of triumph and thanking Mr. Wood for all he had done) started and supported the little institution up to the year 1878, when they issued their own circulars in order to try and put the undertaking on a more permanent basis, he had nothing but feelings of thankfulness for what they had been seeing that day. And he should not be speaking as a member of a Board which always tried to be eminently practical unless he added a very practical suggestion. They ought to be very grateful to Mr. Wood, but in order to show their gratitude they must not confine it to words, but they must enrol themselves one and all in the list of subscribers (applause) and try and help him out in making this institution first in efficiency as a hospital in the county as it was as a building. Rugby stood from this day eminent on the high pedestal for all works of charity, and they had to thank Mr. and Mrs. Wood for it (loud applause). It was rather his duty to pronounce a funeral oration on the late Board than to talk of the present one, but he would simply give them four figures which would enable them to see how much or how little had been in the time since Miss Nicholson and Mr. Campbell first interested themselves in the undertaking¹⁴. There had been 1140 in-patients passed through the hospital, 6,332 out patients, and 354 cases of dentistry treated, making a total of 7,026 (cheers). He had nothing more to say except that he knew those members of the old Board who had the strength were going to give their services to the present Board, and he could only hope that they would be able to carry out their operations with the same internal harmony, representativeness, and unsectarianism with which the old Board was able to carry out the work (applause). Dr. Simpson (who was also greeted with a burst of applause) assured them, on behalf of the medical staff, that no efforts should be wanting on their part to make the Hospital of St. Cross a success (applause). All they wanted was the support and good feeling of the subscribers, and that he thought had been shown that day they should have (applause).

Mr. Wood next proposed "The Architect and the Builder" and, in doing so remarked that for his friend Mr. Wilson he could say that he had brought to bear upon the work very great natural talent, a thorough knowledge of his profession, and the most indomitable industry and perseverance in working out the plans – and, what they did not get from every architect, he had shown an anxious and willing desire from the beginning to the end to consult the wishes and views of a troublesome client. With regard to the builders he (Mr. Wood) was extremely indebted to them for giving a most excellent building. He was told by those who were competent to judge that it was strong substantial and good and well finished in every part (applause), and that it would be many long years before the governors were called upon for any important expense in the structural part of the building. They

¹⁴ The Rugby Nursing House was opened on 15th June 1869, 15 years earlier and the population of Rugby was then about 6,500. Source: Hospital of St. Cross published by Rugby Health Authority ~1984.

would all agree that they were extremely indebted both to Mr. Wilson and Messrs. Parnell (applause).

Replying to the toast, Mr. Wilson, after thanking them, said it had been a very great privilege to him to have such a client as Mr. Wood. There were few clients so ready to do anything during the progress of a work in the way of small additions that might crop up to improve the building as Mr. Wood had been. He had never had to ask Mr. Wood for a thing that he considered a real improvement to the building that he had refused (applause). With regard to the way in which the work had been done, he was very satisfied, and it was only done in the way Messrs. Parnell would be expected to do and always did their work (cheers). He was very sorry they had not the pleasure of seeing Mr. Parnell, sen., present, but he was unable through illness to be with them. Mr. Parnell, jun., said it was always very gratifying to hear that one's work had given satisfaction, but in this case, perhaps, the compliment was a little beyond one's deserts, inasmuch as being so intimately connected with Rugby, and having been bred and born in the place, and having so great an appreciation of the noble gift, it had been a work more of love than perhaps of business (applause).

Mr. J.A. Darlington, whose popularity drew forth a cordial greeting, proposed "The town and trade of Rugby." This was a day long to be remembered by those generous donors, by the town of Rugby, and especially by the industrial classes. In the building which had been opened sympathy and science, in the form of medical skill and trained nursing, would vie with each other to banish disease and to mitigate the sufferings of those who had met with sudden and violent injuries; and he looked upon this building as the working man's nursing home. It was a very difficult thing to build a large hospital, even when they had the money at hand. Some of the largest hospitals he had seen in his life – and he referred more particularly to one he had seen in Paris, which cost £1,200 per bed¹⁵ – had not been very conspicuous successes. The architect was in a great measure controlled by the experience of the medical profession, and they all know the popular saying that doctors sometimes differed; and knowing all the difficulties of the case, they must see how they had been overcome by the munificent donor and his committee. It was a great gain to the town of Rugby to have such a fine building so beautifully placed – an abiding ornament and a delight to the people (applause). And he was sure Rugby would be in every respect proud of the gift. They must not forget that health was the only fortune which the working man possesses, and therefore the object in such an institution was to recover as quickly as possible those who were received within its walls. He believed if they would pitch upon the healthiest spot in the world, it would be in a hut on Salisbury plain. They could not have Salisbury plain in Warwickshire, but he was quite sure the good food, nursing, the medical care and the sanitation in this new building would be so many very precious things to the poor patients, as compared with what he would have to undergo at home. It had been said that there was no sympathy between the rich and the poor, but it was said by those who were seldom guilty of any practical philanthropy themselves. They could not go through the numerous towns in this county without seeing noble instances like this where the rich had poured their gold without measure as it were into the lap of the poor for the permanent welfare of the people (hear hear), and in this town they had a noble proof and an abiding illustration that we had living in our¹⁶ midst, individuals who had a large and generous sympathy with suffering, and who are not indifferent to the short and

¹⁵ Based on the build cost of £10,000 the Hospital of St Cross cost £312 per bed - or £936 if the endowment and lands are included.

¹⁶ End of column 4

simple annals of the poor (applause). The munificent donors had done good by stealth – their left hand had hardly known what their right hand did. They gave their voice to few, but they had lent their ears to suffering, and that building would speak for them. It would tell of all the generous impulses which had moved their hearts, and it would make them famous amongst the greatest of Rugby's benefactors (cheers). Mr. John Loverock, whose name was coupled with the toast responded, and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Wood on behalf of the town and district for their munificent gift, and for their hospitality.

The Chairman then informed the company that Mr. and Mrs. Pennington in the exercise of that graceful hospitality which had thrown a fragrance around Westfield House for many years past, had asked them all to a garden party that afternoon; and he added:- Before parting let me, on behalf of Mrs. Wood and myself, thank you very warmly for coming here and gathering round us on this occasion to wish God-speed to the Hospital of St. Cross. It is a day we have all looked forward to with very great pleasure, a day on which, like Seged, King of Abyssinia, we were determined to be happy (applause).

The proceedings ended at four o'clock.

The company then walked to Westfield House, where they were received by Mr. Mrs. And Miss Pennington, and the time was agreeably spent till six o'clock. Excellent music was discoursed by the Militia Band which had proceeded there. Mr. J.W. Vecqueray, of Hillbrow, also welcomed all who liked to call there.

THE FESTITIVIES

It was the natural desire of the inhabitants to show their gratitude for the gift, and their high appreciation of the generous impulses of the donors. A general committee of tradesmen, with Mr. W Cropper as chairman and Mr. A.J. Lawrence as hon. sec. to organise a commemoration day, was appointed as follows:- Messrs. Cropper, G. Loverock, J.B. Over, J. Loverock, T.W. Walding, L. Hards, J. Parnell, jun. Rd. Over, J. Edmunds, J.B. Hands, S. Welldon, A.R. Cox, A.G. Chamberlain, W.W. Bird, T.M. Wratishaw, R. Walker, J. Hopewell, J. Price, E. Tait, T. Beasley, P. Simpson, W. Clarke, W. Phillips, A. Over, T. Bromwich, J.K. Kenning, H. Bromwich, W.H. Over, T. Edmunds, J. Gray, W. Flint, Rev. J.H. Corson, F. Betts, A.J. Lawrence, W. Waite, J. Thompson, G. Darkin, and C.J. Elkington. Never perhaps was the cause of rejoicing more unanimously acknowledged; and so generous was the response to the appeal of the committee for subscriptions to carry out the idea, that within a few days £200 was raised. As Mr. Wood was providing a luncheon for the more affluent classes, it was decided to give the poorer people a free meat tea. The tradesmen of the town agreed to close their establishments, and the residents generally cordially joined in the proposition that the day should be observed as a general holiday. To carry out the necessary arrangements, and to provide amusement for everybody, sub-committees were formed, who, in the short time at their disposal, did everything that could be done, and as the sequel proved, with the most satisfactory results.

The work of providing a free meat tea for about a thousand persons was no light task, but in the hands of Messrs. P. Simpson, Rd. Over, H. Bromwich, John Edmunds (Market Place) and T.W. Walding everything went with the regularity of clock work. As soon as the luncheon part had left the

hall the tables were cleared and re-arranged by Mr. Hobley, the caterer, who then loaded them with all kinds of joints, sweets, &c. and more than fulfilled his promise to the committee to provide abundance of the best for everybody. To each table a certain number of ladies and gentlemen who had volunteered their services were told off as tea-makers, waiters, and carvers, each one having work to do. The guests who numbered nearly a thousand were seated in three batches, commencing at 5 o'clock and three quarters of an hour was allowed for each lot. The tickets specified at what hour the holder was entitled to sit down, and as we have said everything worked with the greatest smoothness, and every person left the hall well satisfied and very grateful. The workhouse inmates and almspeople who all received enjoyed themselves immensely. Music was provided by the volunteer and militia bands who played outside in High Street. The distribution of tickets was left in the hands of Messrs. Simpson, Tait, J. Loverock, Walding, and T. Edmunds, who divided them among the subscribers, *pro rata*, to give to deserving people.

In the meantime a free fête was being held in the Recreation Ground, whither a large number of the otherwise unoccupied, including many from the villages around, wended their way to witness the attractions provided by the Band and Amusements Committee, consisting of Messrs. A.R. Cox, R. Walker, W. Phillips, J. Hopewell, and G. Loverock. At one o'clock the Volunteer Band, under the direction of Mr. Buckingham, marched to the ground, and was followed later on by Mr. Baldwin's Band, and they played selections of music during the afternoon. Every half hour exceedingly clever performances were given by Algie and Marti, sensational equilibrists and jugglers, Snowdon and Leslie negro comedians and dancers, and Motta Keitch, the Japanese ropewalker, and the utmost satisfaction was expressed with their performances. Mr. Holman (Rugby), volunteered some comic songs, which were also appreciated, and "young Rugby" was delighted with a capital punch and judy show, and other things provided for their special delectation. Swing boards, round-about, and rifle galleries, were admitted and were fully patronized, as were also the various refreshment booths where nonintoxicating beverages only were supplied, the largest of which was occupied by Mr. James Price, of the Bull Inn. When the bands played for dancing an unusually large number joined in the exercise; everybody seemed happy and bent on enjoyment, and the affair was a gigantic social gathering, the number of people present being estimated from 10,000 to 12,000 persons. The final attraction, a grand display of fireworks, by Mr. Pain, of London, was anxiously awaited, and it proved a most brilliant success.

The display commenced with the ascent of two balloons with fireworks attached, and in addition to hosts of exceedingly fine bombs, rockets, and other minor effects, there were numerous remarkably good set pieces, amongst which may be mentioned a representation in coloured fires of "Jumbo", who wagged his tail and moved his trunk and legs in a most amusing way. A grand piece, showing the motto "Thanks to our donor, R.H. Wood," was greeted with loud cheering; and a representation of the bombardment of Alexandria, followed by a simultaneous discharge of a large number of rockets brought one of the most brilliant spectacles of the kind ever seen in Rugby to a close. Messrs. J. Price, A.G. Chamberlain, W. Phillips, J.B. over, and H. Bromwich formed the sub-committee appointed to look after this item in the day's proceedings.

THE DECORATIONS

The General Committee resolved to spend a certain sum in decorations, and Messrs. W.H. Over, A.G. Chamberlain, T. Beasley, J. Gray, and S. Welldon, were deputed to do the best they could with the sum at their disposal. At the entrance to Barby Road a triumphal arch was fixed, surmounted with the royal standard, and bearing on one side the motto, "Bless the Founders of the Hospital of St Cross," and on the reverse side, "Long life and happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Wood." Across the bottom of Sheep Street was a festoon of evergreens, from which hung the motto, " May the Hospital of St. Cross prove a blessing to the afflicted" and "Long live the donors." Across the bottom of High Street hung a similar festoon with the words "may God prosper our labours" and "May our efforts be crowned with success." Lines of flags were also placed by the committee across the top of Albert Street, Railway Terrace, Little Church Street, Barby Road and other places, and the front of the Town Hall was decorated with flags, two large royal standards hanging from the centre window, the word "Welcome" appearing over the entrance. Many of the lampposts were decorated with bannerets and coloured drapery. The inhabitants supplemented these efforts by the extensive use of bunting, festoons, arches and mottoes. High Street and Sheep Street were converted into avenues of colour; there was scarcely a window in the main streets from which a flag did not hang, and in the bye streets they were also plentifully used. In the drive to the hospital stood a very handsome and elaborate arch of evergreens, bearing the initials "R.H.W." The trees in the grounds at Hillbrow were gay with flags, and at Oak Terrace was another arch, clothed with oak leaves, constructed by Mr. Gilbey, and with appropriate mottoes neatly worked in cotton by Miss White. Festoons and other arrangements bearing suitable mottoes spanned the streets at the following points:- Mr. H.W. Linnell's, Railway Terrace, Mrs. Hillgrove's, Church Street, Mr. G. Wright's, North Street, Mr. Stannard's, Market Place, Mr. Harris's, Dunchurch Road, Mr. Elliot's, Royal Oak, Mr. Hollman's, Little Church Street; Mr. Shadwick's, Warwick Street. At the Old Bank, under a trophy of flags, hung the motto "Success to the Hospital of St. Cross: Long life to Mr. and Mrs. Wood"; and at Mr. T. Hand's, Sheep Street, was a very neat motto, "Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy". Simple festoons and lines of flags too numerous to mention crossed the streets at other points, and the cabstand was set off with banners, &c. Flags were hoisted on the Parish, Holy Trinity, and St. Marie's Churches, and the bells were rung at intervals. At night the Braye lamps were lighted to their full extent, and a large crown at the Wine Barrel was lighted up. We should have liked to give a more detailed description of the decorations, but want of space forbids it.

In conclusion we may say that the occasion proved as it was intended it should be, a thorough success and an event not likely to be forgotten by those who participated in it. Supt. Palmer and the constables under his direction gave willing and hearty assistance to the committee at all pints, and it is not the least pleasing fact in connection with the day's proceedings that they were never called upon to discharge sterner duties of their office.