

WINIFRED JANE DAMP

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS - 12 March 1955

NEWPORT

TESTIMONIAL TO MISS W. J. DAMP. - Miss W. J. Damp, B.A., senior mistress of the County Secondary Grammar School, is retiring at the end of the summer term. She has been connected with the school first as a scholar and then as mistress, since it opened in 1907. When the Old Students' Association was formed in 1919 she became the joint hon. secretary, and since then hundreds of former students have cause to remember her deep personal interest in their careers. She has rendered outstanding service in keeping the old students' association going through more than 30 years, and her knowledge of successive generations of students must be unique. The committee of the old students' association, feeling that her retirement should be the occasion of a presentation, have decided to launch an appeal. The head master or the hon. treasurer (Mr. A. E. Guttridge, J.P. of Adelaide Grove, East Cowes) will be pleased to receive donations by March 31st, and it is hoped to make the presentation, including an album containing the names of subscribers, on July 9th.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS - 23 July 1955

NEWPORT

SENIOR MISTRESS HONOURED. – On Tuesday a programme of music and verse was given to an audience of parents by pupils of the County Secondary Grammar School, many of whom had competed successfully in the Musical Festival. The occasion was a presentation to Miss W. J. Damp by the Parents' Association to mark her retirement from the position of senior mistress. Before the Head Master (Mr. S. G. Ward) introduced this happy ceremony Miss Damp received a bouquet from Pauline Jennings, daughter of Mrs. Jennings, a member of the association committee. On behalf of the association, Mr. E. G. Taylor (secretary) thanked Miss Damp for the great service that she had given to the school and the association during her many years in Newport, and presented her with a handbag as a token of their gratitude and good wishes. In her reply, Miss Damp spoke of the wonderful work of the association which, though of fairly recent origin, was, she thought, one of the best things that had happened in the life of the school. The gift would be a lasting reminder of the kindness of so many parents whom she had known. Speaking as an old friend and former colleague of Miss Damp, the Rev. L. J. D. Wheatley (chairman of the Governing Body) expressed the deep appreciation of his fellow governors for one whose record of devoted service was almost unique. He hoped that it might be matched by the rewarding satisfaction that should come to Miss Damp from the successes and regard of her pupils. Both as a parent and the County Education Officer, Mr. A. L. Hutchinson thanked the pupils who had performed, and Mr. J. Toplis, who arranged the programme, for a delightful entertainment. He said the school owed much to Miss Damp for all she had done as senior mistress, as well as in her own subject. Such a post was a great responsibility in a Co-educational school, and the pleasure and pride that so many parents could take in the school and its pupils was evidence of Miss Damp's success. Miss Damp was given an ovation as she left the platform.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY PRESS - 6 October 1960

SUDDEN DEATH OF MISS WINIFRED DAMP

NEWPORT'S "MISS CHIPS"

An association with the former Newport County Secondary Grammar School (now Carisbrooke Grammar School) spanning over half-a-century has been broken by the sudden death at the Keats Green Hotel, Shanklin, on Friday week, of Miss Winifred Jane Damp, aged 67.

Miss Damp, who resided at Blenheim, Medina Avenue, Newport, was affectionately regarded as the school's "Miss Chips". In 1905 she attended the pupil teacher centre at Nodehill, and two years later became a pupil when the Newport Secondary School (later renamed Secondary Grammar) was established in the building. On leaving school, Miss Damp received training first at Southlands College in London, and then from 1913-14 at the Sorbonne in Paris. She returned to the school where she was once a pupil in 1918 as French mistress, a position with she held until retiring in July, 1955. From 1946 she was senior mistress. She gained first-class honours in French in the external Bachelor of Arts examination London University in 1923.

In 1919, when the school formed an old student's association, Miss Damp became joint hon. secretary, and it was not until two years ago that she relinquished these duties. She did not, however, end her interest in the school and the association, and she continued to give valued assistance in the distribution of the school magazine and in other ways. Evidence of the deep esteem in which she was held by all who knew her was illustrated at her retirement, when many generations of old students contributed £150. Among the cheques received were some from New Zealand, Switzerland, America, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, South Africa, and Australia. The money was spent on buying a television set for Miss Damp, and she was also presented with an illuminated book containing the names of more than 400 subscribers.

Miss Damp was the eldest surviving daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Frank Damp, and was a director of the well-known Newport firm of Messrs. H. and F. Damp. Since the death of her mother in 1940 she had resided with her sister, Miss Margaret Damp, who had devotedly nursed her through ill-health in recent years. She underwent a serious operation in 1957, but of late her condition had enabled her to go for a stay at Shanklin, and she was in fact due to have returned home on the day she died.

THE FUNERAL

Miss Damp was a popular member of the Castlehold Baptist Church, Newport, where the funeral service took place on Tuesday, conducted by the minister (the Rev. J. H. Williams). Bible readings were given by Mr. S. G. Ward (headmaster of Carisbrooke Grammar School), and Mrs. D. E. Knights (organist) accompanied the hymns "God of the living, in Whose eyes" and "There is a land pure delight".

Mr. Williams said that they remembered Miss Damp with a deep sense of gratitude to God. There must be a great company of men and women who, when they looked back over their lives acknowledged that they owed her a debt, which they could never repay. She had two main interests in life - her school and her church. That was quite natural for her connection with both went back over 50 years. She was greatly loved, and one of her old pupils wrote of her, "She was pure gold." Another speaking of her retirement, said "It hardly seems credible how the school can carry on without her." Mr. Williams said he thought of her that day as a person, and the memory he had was one of her large-heartedness. She had a remarkable ability for remembering the names of all who came under her influence, due to the fact that she was intensely interested in people. Hundreds of people had a place of real affection in her heart, and because he loved them, so they loved her in return. He remembered all her courage in the face of illness, and her great sense of humour, which shone through her personality and enabled her to bear, in amazing spirit, physical pain which would have brought many lesser souls to the depths of despair. Above all else she was a Christian, who in her service at home, in the school, and in the church, felt that she was doing that to which God had called her.

The family mourners were Miss M. Damp (sister), Mr. and Mrs. C. Damp (brother and sister-in-law), Mr. D. Damp (nephew), and the Misses R. and J. Damp (nieces). Mrs. D. Mitchell (niece) was unable to attend. In addition to many church members, the County Education Committee, the governing body of Carisbrooke Grammar School, the Old Students' Association, Parent-Teacher Association, and the staff and pupils of the school were represented. There were numerous floral tributes. Interment was at Carisbrooke Cemetery. The arrangements were made by Messrs. H. and F. Damp Ltd.

Transcription by Rosemary Stewart for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries
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