

BASQUES FOR WITNEY?

Dispersal of Refugee Children

It is very probable that a number of Basque children, now in camp at Southampton, will be accommodated at Witney shortly.

The prospective Independent Progressive candidate for North Oxon, Mr Patrick Early, one of the leaders of the scheme, has stated that the Southampton camp is being dispersed and the Joint Committee for Spanish Relief is anxious to find homes for the children in groups of 40 and 50. Enquiries have been made on the possibility of securing suitable buildings in the Witney district.

We understand that a large number of voluntary helpers have expressed their willingness to assist the scheme. But the raising of the necessary funds is presenting a problem at the moment.

A Witney warehouse and a number of other buildings have been under review and a meeting was held last evening, at which several people representing organisations such as Toc H, the Witney Women's Institute, the Mayor of Oxford's Spanish relief Fund and similar bodies were present.

If the scheme is deemed practicable, the first instalment of 25 children will be sent to Witney with at least one teacher, and, also one matron who speaks Spanish.

(Witney Gazette, Friday June 18th, 1937, p.6)

BASQUE CHILDREN AT ASTON

Refugees Happy in New Home

The former children's home in the village of Aston, near Bampton, is now housing 40 Basque children, who arrived there on Wednesday.

A large crowd gave the little visitors a good welcome: there were 25 girls and 15 young lads who seemed a little disturbed by their journey from Southampton or by their new surroundings.

People who had volunteered to look after the children welcomed them, these including Mrs. W. Dalgliesh, Miss Ruth Early, Miss R. Early, Miss Dickinson, Mrs. List, Mrs. Bezant, the Rev. J. Lopes, Mr. G. Bovington and Mr. F.G. Bovington.

Only one teacher Maria Teresa Mayoral and a girl of about 17 are at present in charge of the party, but the volunteer interpreters came with the coach of children and were busily engaged. These were undergraduates Mr. P. Adams (St. John's), Mr. D.H. Clibborn (St. Edmund Hall) and Mr. J.O. Vere-Stead (Keble).

Many articles are still urgently needed for some of the little refugees have only their clothes, and have to keep in underwear, the boys being particularly ill-clad.

The children appear very happy and the work for them appears all the more worthwhile when their sincere appreciation is clearly evident.

(Witney Gazette, Friday June 25th, 1937, p.3)

ASTON PROPERTY

The question of rates on the premises at Aston occupied by the Basque children came up for discussion when a letter was read from the North Oxon Basque Children's Committee asking for consideration of possible relief on rates on the premises. It was recommended that during such time as the property is occupied by Basque children, payment of any rates will be excused on the grounds of poverty. The report was adopted.

(Witney Gazette, Friday July 30th, 1937, p.3)

BASQUE CHILDREN SEE SHIRLEY TEMPLE

A party of almost forty children from St. Joseph's, Aston, paid a visit to the Palace Cinema, Witney, on Thursday afternoon to see the matinee of "Stowaway", starring Shirley Temple.

The children were there at the invitation of Mr. G. A. Huddleston.

(Witney Gazette, Friday December 10th, 1937, p. 4)

BASQUE CHILDREN

Basque children from St. Joseph's Home, Aston, took part with Burford schoolchildren in a concert in the Church Home, Burford, on Saturday night. The concert was in aid of the funds of the North Oxon Basque Children's Committee.

In the first half of the programme the Burford children played folk dance tunes on pipes and well-known airs on mouth organ and danced country dances and Oxfordshire Morris dances.

The Basque children sang national songs and performed popular Basque dances, concluding with their national hymn.

The concert was well attended and the collection accounted to £3. 14s. 3d.

(Witney Gazette, Friday December 17th, 1937, p. 6)

TOC H PARTY FOR BASQUE CHILDREN

On Saturday afternoon, the Witney branch of Toc H gave the 35 Basque children now living at St. Joseph's, Aston, a Christmas Party at the Church House.

The children, who came in national costume, played games with the members and friends, and gave a display of Spanish dances.

Each child afterwards received a gift from Father Christmas (Mr. S. Florey).

The party was organised by Mr. A. E. Taphouse, Mr. H. Turner being in charge of the decorations. Miss Sullivan and Mrs. Dalgliesh organised the games.

The following ladies helped with the teas, gifts, etc.: Mrs. A. Sellman, Mrs. G. Cooper, Miss Pratley, Miss J. Rickett, Mrs. G. Bartlett, Mrs. A. E. Taphouse, Mrs. H. Turner, Miss Lea, Mrs. R. Wilton, Mrs. T. Leigh, Mrs. F. Florey, Miss P. Ransom, Miss R. Early.

(Witney Gazette, Friday December 24th, 1937, p.6)