

SWAN SONG OF SCOTT CLUB MORTGAGE SUNG IN TOAST AND STORY FRIDAY EVENING

Load of Debt Lifted, Woman's Organization Now Owns Handsome Building Bearing Appropriate Name—Splendid Address of President Mrs. L. G. Rhodes.

Standing upon the rostrum of the Scott club assembly hall, with a background of beautiful flowers and ferns to add to the effect of the picture and facing an audience of 180 ladies and gentlemen, members of the club and their husbands, Mrs. L. G. Rhodes, president of the club, last evening publicly burned the mortgage of \$450 on the building and property of this organization of South Haven women, obliterating the last sign of obligation and, with emotions of satisfaction difficult to conceal, made it known to those gathered in honor of the occasion that the members may now say, in all confidence, "this is our club building."

As the last vestage of the document crumbled into blackened ashes in her hand, she closed one of the cleverest soliloquys, if the term may be used, ever heard in this city and her well modulated voice, in tones of deep earnestness as she continued a very appropriate "swan song" to the slowly disappearing token of financial obligation, could be heard distinctly in every corner of the assembly hall. A round of applause from every person present indicated the general satisfaction felt at the final success of the efforts of members and friends in clearing the club debt.

Mrs. Rhodes has been one of the most active members of the club in engineering its finances to the successful conclusion of last evening. Not only as president of the club, but because of her untiring energies to bring about this end, was the honor of destroying the mortgage given her and that she performed her part in a most admirable manner, puts it mildly.

A beautiful bouquet of chrysanthemums was presented her by Mrs. E. A. Hartman, who, in a few well chosen words expressed the appreciation of the club of all her efforts as

its president and an influential member and gave her much of the credit due for the final happy outcome.

Prior to the burning of the mortgage, Mrs. Rhodes made the following happy address, one of the best responses of a very fine program of toasts, each of which was referred to by Mrs. R. T. Pierce, toastmistress of the evening, in a charming manner:

Longfellow in "Hyperion" said: "Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present, it is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart." But there is no occasion tonight for us to look back mournfully into the past, it is rather a time for rejoicing.

In connection with the burning of the mortgage I have been thinking of clouds and sunshine. The debt I have likened to a cloud—the lifting of the debt, to sunshine.

Debt is always a cloud, while it may give an impetus to work, urging us ever on toward the goal—the payment of the debt. Yet our main object is the raising of the debt and all thought of progress or advancement for the time being is laid aside, and thus our resolutions to branch out or attempt new lines of work, are (in the words of Shakespeare) "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, and enterprises of great pith and moment with this belief, their course turn awry, and lose the name of action."

But now the debt is paid and the cloud is lifted, and our beautiful little club house stands free of debt, a monument to the untiring efforts and generosity of our members and their husbands, bless them for thus opening their pocketbooks.

And after the clouds comes sunshine. The sunshine brings with it warmth and cheer; it animates, it causes the leaves and blossoms to burst forth; it imparts new life and causes all nature to rejoice.

This is what our club should mean in this community. It should bring sunshine into the life of its members;

its meetings should be a help and an inspiration, robbing life of its dull monotonous grind, which is the experience of so many housekeepers, whose life does not go beyond their own home. I say the meetings should be a help and an inspiration to every member, but the influence should not end here—to fulfil its true mission as a club, it must not be self-centered, but must reach out, striving to bless and help the life of this community. It should touch all the different phases of our local life—social, civic, moral. Its motto should be "not to be ministered unto, but to minister; not to be served, but to serve."

There are those who tell us that the door of opportunity is never opened but once and if not entered then all hope is gone, but I prefer to accept the thought in the following verses:

They do me wrong who say I come
no more,
When once I knock and fail to find
you in,
For every day I stand outside your
door
And bid you wake and rise to fight
and win.
Laugh like a boy at splendors that
have sped,
To vanished joys be blind and deaf
and dumb:
My judgments seal the dread past
with its dead,
But never bind a moment yet to
come.

And so for me the burning of this mortgage means opportunity for service, for enlargement, for broadening and widening of our mental vision, and of greater service and benefit to the community at large.

Early in the evening it was evident that assignment of member to committees could not have been more happy, for every arrangement had been made in a way to insure the complete success of the affair.

The decorations both in the parlors and in the dining room were in the height of good taste, their simplicity giving to both rooms a charm as of a well-appointed home. Cut-flowers, vines and autumn leaves had been freely used in both rooms, together with rugs and flags in the parlors.

The supper, both as to viands and service, gave ample evidence that the Scott Club ladies are thoroughly versed in the practice of the culinary art, and that they have put into application in their own kitchens whatever they have learned at the club.

The Program and Reception committees likewise had done their work well, their efforts rounding out the success of a well-planned and successfully carried out function.

When those who feasted at the second tables had joined the earlier diners in the parlors, Mrs. Rhodes as president spoke a brief word of greeting and welcome to the members and guests, and introduced Mrs. R. T. Pierce, a former president and always an ardent worker for the club, as toastmistress.

Mrs. Pierce referred to the banquets held by the club in its earlier years and of the desire to hold one this year to celebrate the payment of the debt. She also greeted and welcomed the guests, saying that their presence betokened their interest in something of value to the community, in the club that for a quarter of a century had afforded a place for the women of South Haven to meet for study and discussion for the benefit of themselves and of the community.

There had been very little formality and stiffness about the banquet anyway up to the time Mrs. Carnes was called upon for the first

toast, and there was none whatever after her opening remarks. Mrs. Carnes was introduced by the toastmistress as one who had been "A Tower of Strength to the Club," and before proceeding to respond to the toast, "Our Club," Mrs. Carnes remarked that she had heard it said that "you could tell a Scott Club member anywhere but you couldn't tell her much," an observation that brought shouts of laughter from members and husbands alike.

"THE READING CLUB" THIRTY YEARS AGO

Eight Ladies Met at Dyckman Home
and Organized First Literary Club.
Interesting Data of Obstacles Met
and Overcome by Early Founders.
Sentiment of Original Poem on
Club True Today.

The following interesting history of the Scott Club was given at the banquet last evening by Mrs. G. D. Carnes and proved to be one of the most interesting and entertaining responses on the program. Mrs. Carnes

has a keen sense of humor and her paper was embellished with little touches of impromptu wit, as she read it, which brought burst of laughter and kept the audience in a happy mood throughout. Mrs. Carnes said:

I have been asked to speak tonight about our club. This club is so well known I hardly see the need. I have heard it said that you could tell a member of the Scott anywhere, but you couldn't tell her much.

At a banquet given in the Baptist church twenty-two years ago, Mrs. Chas. Delemer, our first president, responded to the toast, "The Scott Club," and the sentiment was the one given tonight.

United we stand, divided we fall. The united action of our club is proved here tonight. Our building is an ornament to the town, and our club an honor to the community. The building has cost between seven and eight thousand dollars.

In June, 1889, at the close of our club year, Mrs. Histed, one of our most revered and loved members, gave us a very appropriate original poem. I quote these words:

"At our weekly meetings in
friendship there's gain,
Grown brighter and stronger
each link in the chain;
While seeing the faces of friends
old and new,
We hear and give greeting to
those tried and true;
Each week in our reading some
knowledge we gain,
And store it for use as the farmer
stores grain."

With all the changes that are now taking place, in our ideas, in our amusements, and in our education, it seems strange that these words should be just as applicable today to this club as they were then. This fact proves that we have stood united.

In the fall of 1883, eight ladies met in the parlors of Mrs. A. S. Dyckman and organized what we called at that time "The Reading Club." After the fashion of the American rush and to the great annoyance of some of us, our club was often spoken of as the "Read." Mrs. Dyckman was chosen president. I think all present were given some office. I was secretary. We had a treasurer, although there were no dues and not a cent in sight.

Before this, Mrs. Geo. Rogers and I had met several times and had read aloud to each other, looking up the words which we could not pronounce. This we did because we had found in the meetings of the Literary Society the need of knowing more about the correct pronunciation of words.

We read Scott's novels at first, and the name Scott Club originated from this fact. We followed our novel reading by a course in history, first a

history of the world and then that of the different countries, spending several years with our own America.

We felt the need of a dictionary and one day we arranged for a gathering and supper to take place the same evening at the Congregational church. There we asked not for a contribution but an offering. We succeeded splendidly. We have no record of the meeting, but I remember the fine time, the good supper, and the ex-

amples of first-class Irish wit on the part of Mr. Delemer and Mr. Myhan.

The first lines of an original poem which Mrs. Dyckman wrote began, "When Ladies' Literary are in need of a dictionary," so you can imagine some of the sly hits we received for enticing them out by promising a good supper.

It was a very stormy night. No sidewalk cleaning was heard of in those days, and there were not so many sidewalks as now, but I think nearly every one was there.

We held our club meetings in our homes and this dictionary was a heavy proposition to carry about. One day Mrs. H. M. Avery came in bearing in her arms the new dictionary in a green felt bag nicely mitered at the corners, so that it fitted the book. On this bag were the words "Scott Club" in large letters embroidered in red. This was the first time I ever heard the name applied to the club.

Mrs. Pierce after some clever thrusts at the masculine half of the audience, called upon Mrs. S. H. Wilson to respond to the toast, "Our Husbands," and the latter

roasted and toasted the husbands and the wives impartially and thoroly. She referred to the part in club affairs played by several of the husbands, and she suggested that the lighter meal at home on Tuesday night account for the Masons having such frequent and hearty lunches after their meetings Tuesday evenings.

In more serious vein, she referred to the assistance, social, moral and financial that the husbands render the club, and she paid a fine tribute to the husbands of earlier days who helped to start the movement that brought the building, and to those of later years for their loyalty and helpfulness.

Remarking that the Scott Club members were anxious to know what others, especially their husbands, thought of them Mrs. Pierce called upon Supt. A. D. Prentice to respond to "What the Scott Club Means to South Haven."