

ANCIENT GOWER BARN BECOMES CHAPEL

"THESE buildings and site were given to the trustees of the St. Madoc Christian Youth Camp by Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Burr, 21st August, 1944, 'While life was being shattered this place was given for the healing of the soul.'"

The inscription is placed just inside an undenominational chapel shown in the accompanying photograph, which was till recently an earth-floored 300-year-old Gower barn, given up to cattle and poultry.

OVER 300 YEARS OLD

To the earlier gift of buildings, many acres and a mile of shore—made in the hope of its being of value to the youth of Wales—the donors have added this conversion of a structure which may well be older than the 300 years for which its history can be traced.

The camp officials arranged a dedication for this afternoon, and there will be held in it, to-morrow, a service commemorating Mr. and Mrs. Burr's golden wedding. This will be conducted by the Rev. Simon Jones, sometime minister of Swansea Unitarian church, and the Rev. Gwilym Rees, former Congregational Moderator and one of the camp trustees.

FAMILY GIFTS

Several weeks' hard work have gone into the transformation. The rough texture of the walls has been simply retained and cream-washed; of the side windows, some were ancient slits and in place of the present window above the altar table a friend is to give a stained glass window.

The masonry seen behind the altar table was a modern fireplace of native stone. The furnishings, including a small organ, have been given by members of the family, and near relatives—and the frontals by an 82-year-old sister of Mrs. Burr.

LONDONERS IN GOWER

This week-end's celebrations are a climax to the donors' very happy settlement in what may well be remotest Gower, a settlement which constitutes an obvious denial of all their previous history as industrially minded-Londoners.

They came to St. Madoc—first

in 1924 for week-ends and holidays, and in 1939 for retirement by way of Catford, Glasgow, Reading, Croydon, the places at which Mr. Burr, with his wife's co-operation in the uprootings involved, sought the experience that led, in December 1914, to his appointment as chief engineer to the Swansea Electricity department.

HOW HE WENT THERE

If this succession appears to the outsider to have been no preparation at all for life far along a narrow lane beyond Llanmadoc, Mr. Burr himself calls his 1924 acquisition sheer luck, the little-considered acceptance of an opportunity which falls, but once in a lifetime, to a few.

After having "merely seen" the pleasant place, he "simply strolled into the Metropole" for an auction and was, to others besides himself, an unexpectedly successful bidder for the house, built by Sir Lancelot Aubrey Fletcher in 1914, and its large surrounding stretches of hills, burrows, meadows and shore.

GOLDEN WEDDING

The low house, set in a sloping terraced garden, beautiful in its reticence and appropriateness, looks down at near sandhills and sea. Meeting its occupants there, the impression is not of their isolation or their age but of their mental liveliness allied to enviable serenity.

Mr. James William Burr and Miss Alice Maud Forgan—of Scots descent—were married at St. Paul's, Hook, near Surbiton, on April 3, 1899, when, following apprenticeship and some years on the continent, he started the career as electrical engineer in England which ended in Swansea.

There are two children, Mr. C. W. Burr and Mrs. John Walters, two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.