

Birchington 1887 – Jubilee Celebrations

Although the Jubilee Celebrations at Birchington are not yet completed – it being understood that a public holiday and feast is to be arranged for upon the completion of the renovation of the church tower - the village has already turned out remarkably well and displayed its loyalty in an unmistakable manner. The streets were decorated with flags in abundance and the Square looked particularly gay with its lines of bunting stretching from side to side.

Feast To The Deaf And Dumb At Quex Park

On Monday Mr. W. J. Ingram entertained the whole of the inmates and staff of the Margate Deaf and Dumb Asylum to a feast of excellent quality, provided by Mr. Hume of Margate, on the lawn of Mr. Ingram's residence in the beautiful and extensive grounds at Quex Park. The party, numbering over 300, left East Margate Station, by special train, at 2.23, under the superintendence of Mr. Elliott, the head master, and Miss Howard, the matron. In the unavoidable absence of Mr. Ingram, the party were welcomed by several members of the Asylum Committee, including Mr. Andrews, Mr. J. Crawford, J.P., and the Rev. W. Taylor-Jones. On their way to the Park the excursionists were loudly cheered by the children of the National School, who, however, appeared to be rather surprised at the responsive demonstration of the deaf-mutes.

The meal was of the most inviting description, comprising, in addition to the ordinary fare, meat patties, jam and fruit tarts, pine apples, and nectarines. Last but not least, was the immense Jubilee cake, weighing a hundredweight and a half, and beautifully ornamented and iced, surmounted with a crown, the Royal monogram being worked around the side. The cake was supplied by the caterer (Mr. Hume), and was quite a triumph of confectionery, which it would seem almost a shame to spoil; but it was intended to be eaten and so at about eight o'clock this monument was dissected, and devoured in great delight. During the afternoon the party were allowed to wander about the Park, exploring its many interesting features, including the numerous cannons, etc. Never before had so many Deaf and Dumb children been seen at Birchington, and their visit created much interest. The clean, healthy, and happy appearance of these Deaf-mutes speaks volumes in praise of the noble Institution in Victoria Road, Margate, where they are so well cared for.

The tables were prettily arranged and the whole scene in this lovely spot was extremely picturesque, and we may mention by the way that an artist from the Illustrated London News (of which Mr. Ingram is proprietor) was present, so that those who see that paper will have the whole picture put before them on a more graphic manner than pen of ours could attempt to depict. Before the party returned, cheers were given for Mr. W. J. Ingram for his liberal and excellent entertainment. Thanks were also accorded to Mr. Cotton, and to those who had assisted in the arrangements of the feast. We will not close our account of this pleasant day without adding a word of commendation to the obliging stationmaster at Birchington - Mr. W. Gurney – for the very able way in which he carried out the extra train arrangements at his station.

Tea for the Children and Aged Poor

On Tuesday, Mrs. S. Gray provided a substantial tea for the children of all denominations, and also for the aged poor of Birchington and Acol. The number of children was about 500, and the old folks 150. The festivities were held in the large green in front of the Hall. Here the children assembled at 3pm., and after having been arranged in fours marched to the Square, headed by Sergeant Smith's Fife and Drum Band. The children carried flags and banners, and the procession presented a pretty appearance. In the green swings had been erected, and there were other sources of amusement for the children until tea was ready. The ground being very dry tables for the children were dispensed with, and the whole scene presented the appearance of a huge picnic. There was a plentiful supply of tea, bread and butter, and cake, which the children thoroughly appreciated.

After the young people had been satisfied, the old folks were provided with a substantial meat tea, Mr. Tapsell being the caterer. The sports in the evening were thoroughly enjoyed by all – even the old men and women ran races, and joined with the youngsters in the tug of war, etc, etc. At about nine o'clock a large Jubilee cake was cut up and distributed, and Mrs. Gray also presented each child with a medal and each old person with a plate in remembrance of her majesty's Jubilee.

Dr. Pittock, of Canterbury, on behalf of Mrs. Gray, welcomed the guests, and remarked that he hoped that within six weeks he should have the pleasure of seeing even a larger gathering in the park adjoining the Hall, when it was proposed to have a treat for the whole of the villagers, to celebrate the completion of the permanent Jubilee memorial, viz., the alterations at the parish church. Among those who were present and assisted in the day's proceedings we noticed Mrs. and the Misses Gray, the Vicar, Mrs and the Misses Alcock, Dr. Pittock (Canterbury), Mr. Spry, Mr. C. and Mrs. Moore, Mr R., Mrs. and the Misses Edwards, Mr. A. R. and Mrs. Rayden, Mr. H. Catford, Lieut. C. and Miss Lyon, Miss Sidders, Mr. J. P. and Miss Barrett, Mr. H. C. Neame, Mrs. Harris, Dr. and Mrs Dring, Mr. W. and Mrs. Austen, etc. Shortly after nine o'clock the National Anthem was sung, and the party separated with cheers for Mrs. Gray.

Dinner To The Waterloo Tower Bell Ringers

The Quex Park Band of Bell-ringers met at the Waterloo Tower at eight on the morning of the Jubilee Day, and performed a peal of Grandsire triples, which occupied three hours, the ringers standing as follows :- Messrs. A.Sayer, treble; L.Willshire, 2nd; G.Willshire, 3rd; C.Willshire, 4th; S.B.Reed, 5th; S.Jarman, 6th; J.J.Bristow, 7th; E.Golder, tenor; conductor, Mr.L.Willshire. At noon fifty rounds were fired on the twelve bells, representing the number of years the Queen has been spared to reign. By the kind invitation of Mr.H.H.P.Cotton, a substantial dinner was provided in excellent style at one o'clock by Host Milgate at the Powell Arms Inn, to which were invited the members of the band, the gardeners and other employees on the estate, and several of the tradesmen of the village, the party numbering in all about 35. The chair was taken by Mr.J.Cornford, and the vice-chair by Mr.T.B.Reed. The health of the Queen, proposed by the chairman, was drunk in a loyal and enthusiastic manner. The national Anthem was then sung, followed by a few appropriate touches upon the hand bells. The health of the other members of

the Royal Family having been duly honoured, the toast of "Mr.Cotton and family" was given, and was received with musical honours, a hope being expressed that he might be spared to see many more anniversaries of the Queen's accession. About half-past five the party broke up with the National Anthem, and again adjourned to the tower, ringing several touches of Grandsires and firing a Royal salute of 21 rounds on the bells.

Night View Of The Island

The brow of the hill just beyond Quex Park, being about the centre of the Isle of Thanet, afforded an excellent site for a night view of the illuminations. The spectacle was grand and unique. Between nine and ten o'clock the darkness was lit up in every direction. The beacon fires at Minster and other places were plainly observable, while the bright sheens at Margate and Ramsgate were continually being heightened by a display of sky rockets. There were but few who had the privilege of witnessing this remarkably interesting scene, but lovers of novelty and illumination would have had a treat of no ordinary character had they taken the trouble to drive round this neighbourhood late on Tuesday evening.

