

The Late Mr. F. W. Mellanby  
Birchington Residents Association – December 1967

Birchington Residents' Association is the poorer for the passing of Fred Mellanby for he has held positions of responsibility since its formation and has been its Vice-President for many years, for which his extensive and expert knowledge of Birchington and its people made him eminently suitable.

He was one of the few surviving members of the old Parish Council which handed over authority to Margate Borough Council in 1935 and while he naturally regretted this step, he had no doubts at all of the necessity for the take-over. He retained a touching faith in the belief that Margate Borough Council would honour its pledge **“to preserve and maintain the amenities of Birchington”** and at times would stoutly defend and praise the Council for carrying out the promise.

He had been saddened recently to find that new men in power in the Borough, either did not know or cared nothing for this pledge in their attempts to bring some of the less attractive aspects of Margate to Birchington and with the Association he would fight these attempts with relentless vigour.

He retained to the end, his clear logical mind and sane outlook on life. The M.P. for Thanet will miss his remorseless heckling and questioning at his public meetings, Fred frequently had him in a tight corner by his wonderful memory and his extensive knowledge of political life.

Fred was also a man of strong principles and was always ready to help the underdog and put his hand in his pocket to help the needy. The writer remembers an occasion when Fred was asked to buy a 21/- ticket for a dinner and he said he would give the necessary to feed the hungry and not the full.

His outlook was one of unbounded optimism and wide vision even at his advanced age and he was glad to have lived to see the tremendous improvements in living conditions for the poorer sections of the community, whom he had served for so long and so well. We mourn his loss and shall miss his wise counsel.