

## HOW EYNHAM CELEBRATED ROYAL OCCASIONS IN THE PAST

*This collection of news items relating to Eynham celebrations of royal occasions in the past was culled from the files of the Oxford Times by Don Chapman and put on display at the Silver Jubilee celebration 1977. Don remarks: "The reports are probably by no means complete. Some seem fairly comprehensive. Others are tantalisingly brief - a reflection no doubt of the diligence or otherwise of the village correspondents who sent them in, the reporters who collected them or the severity with which the sub-editor wielded his blue pencil.*

*"Together, however, they present a fascinating picture and show - we think - that the way the village has celebrated royal occasions has not changed all that much since Victorian times."*

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### **Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee** **- 28 June 1887**

A most auspicious commencement of the Jubilee rejoicings in the parish was made on the evening of the 28th ultimo when a magnificent treat was given by our parish churchwarden, Mr Walter Wilkins, at his house in Mill Street to the children of the National Infants School and a number of others under eight years of age amounting together to more than 250. Ample justice was done to an unlimited supply of tea, plum cake and jam, after the consumption of which swings and various amusements, ending with a display of fireworks, were thoroughly enjoyed, not by the children only, but by many of the parents and other adults kindly admitted to the entertainment.

Vociferous and long-continued cheers were given for the Queen at the instance of the Vicar and subsequently for Mr and Mrs Wilkins. Mr Wilkins in returning thanks expressed the pleasure which it gave him to see so many little ones enjoying themselves on such an occasion and called for three cheers for the Vicar, Mrs Bricknell and the ladies who had obliged them with their presence.

The committee appointed to provide a general Jubilee entertainment for the poorer inhabitants of the parish have been very energetic and successful in their exertions, the result of which on the 12th inst - i.e. July - is looked forward to with interest.

### **Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee** **- Second Instalment**

Although Ensham (so spelt in 1887!) was about the last place in Oxfordshire to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee it did not seem to lose anything by waiting - as the proceedings of Tuesday last were of the most enthusiastic character throughout. The town was made gay with evergreens, bunting, coloured lamps, transparencies, etc. The proceedings commenced with a service in the parish church conducted a by the Vicar. In the afternoon a substantial dinner was given to the poorer inhabitants of the town in a field kindly lent by Mr Druce, where tables had been erected for their convenience. After dinner was over races, tugs-of-war, and other sports were indulged in, a conspicuous object in the field being a leg of mutton on the top of a greasy pole, which was to be the property of anyone who could climb up and strike it three times with his hand. A good many men tried to climb the pole but it was not until late in the evening that a man succeeded in reaching the top and striking the mutton. On coming down he received an ovation - the pole was immediately taken down and the mutton removed, and the man was carried round shoulder high, triumphantly waving his leg of mutton. A large space had been roped off for dancing and near this the Appleton Band was stationed in a waggon, where they went through a capital programme of dance music which was much appreciated. There were also in the field swingboats, roundabouts, shooting galleries, cocoa-nut shies, etc. all of which appeared to be pretty well patronised.

At dark the grounds were illuminated with Chinese lanterns and fairy lamps which, being hung among the trees, produced a very pretty effect. A very good display of fireworks was given, after which the band played another dance and then the National Anthem and the field rapidly cleared. The town was very generally lighted up, many of the illuminations consisting of lamps or candles placed in windows. In other places transparencies of the Queen were seen and the Conservative Club had outside a large star in gas jets. The streets presented a lively appearance till long after midnight.

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The following are the results of the sports. 100 Yards Flat Race (for Boys under 10 years of age) 1. 2s. A. Belcher 2. 1s. W. Walker. 100 Yards Flat Race (for Boys under 15 years of age) 1. 2s. H. Holifield 2. 1s. S. Wale. 100 Yards Flat Race (for Men over 35 years of age) 1. 3s. C. Read 2. 2s. J. Harwood. Tug of War (women) 8 each side. Prize 4s. Sarah Davis and team. 50 Yards Jumping in Sacks (Men) 1. 3s. J. Lambourne. 2. 2s. W. Harriss. 50 Yards Flat Race (for Men over 60 years of age) 1. 5s. J. Whitlock 2. 2s. 6d. Barrett. 100 Yards Flat Race for Women 1. 15 yards of calico Mrs Stayte 2. 10 yards of calico Mrs Jeffrey. 100 Yards Three-legged Race 1. 3s. Hiorns and Ayers 2. 2s. Clarke and Morgan. 100 Yards Flat Race (for Girls under 15 years of age) 1. 15 yards of calico E. Walker 2. 10 yards of calico E. Harwood. 50 Yards Sack, Boys under 16 1. 2s. 6d. Bennett 2. 1s. Lambourne. Tug of War (Men) 8 each side Prize 8s. J. Biggerstaff and team. 100 Yards Three-legged Race (for boys under 16 years of age) 1. 2s. Ayers and Hiorns 2. 1s. Clarke and Ovenell. 100 Yards Flat Race (for Girls under 10 years of age) 1. 15 yards of calico E. Harwood 2. 10 yards of calico A. Wilsden. 100 Yards Turncoat Race (for Boys under 15 years of age) 1. 3s. Holifield 2. 2s. Martin. Climbing the Greasy Pole for a Leg of Mutton G. Dean.

*/more follows*

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### Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee

*- Second Instalment (continued)*

On Wednesday the Jubilee Committee met and distributed about 100lbs of beef, 72 loaves, cake tea, etc. to all those who from any cause could not be present on the field.

In the course of the afternoon the Vicar telegraphed to Sir Henry Ponsonby - "One thousand three hundred of the poorer inhabitants, with the Vicar and parishioners in general, of the historical village of Ensham, beg to present to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria their thankful congratulations upon the past, with hearty prayers for Her Majesty's health, peace and prosperity in the future".

To this the following reply was promptly received - "The Queen thanks your parishioners for their kind congratulations" - PONSONBY. To the Vicar of Ensham.

### Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee

**- 28 June 1897**

A free dinner to adults over 60 and a free tea to children, both laid in Mr Webb's field, were the chief events of the day. The Vicar presided over the dinner and music was supplied by the Freeland Band; various amusements followed. The houses were decorated.

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### Edward VII's Coronation

**- 26 June 1902**

*(In fact the king contracted peritonitis and the coronation had to be delayed until 9 August. But the celebrations went ahead nonetheless!)*

Coronation Bonfire: The bonfire arranged to be lighted on Beacon Hill for the Coronation was lighted on Monday night in common with many others throughout the country. The materials were kindly supplied, by Mr Franklin of Swinford, who also provided the men and horses and waggons for the cartage. The bonfire was lighted about 9.45 in the presence of a great number of people including many from Oxford and the surrounding district and many more would probably have been present had the weather been more favourable.

The Old Folks Dinner: The dinner arranged by the Coronation Celebration Committee for the old folks took place at the National Schoolroom on Friday at noon, about 80 old people being present or having dinner sent to them at their homes. An excellent hot dinner was provided consisting of roast beef and mutton and sparerib, Yorkshire pudding, new potatoes and cabbage, plum pudding, cheese and lettuce, beer being provided for those who liked it and mineral waters for teetotallers. Members of the committee acted as carvers. After dinner the Vicar made a few remarks, expressing pleasure at seeing so many present and all appeared to enjoy themselves immensely.

Children's Gathering: On Friday afternoon about 400 children of the parish were entertained at the Gables by Mr and Mrs Arthur Blake. On their arrival the children were regaled with cake and lemonade after which they enjoyed rides on a steam roundabout, which had been engaged for the occasion, and ran races. Biscuits and sweets were distributed and before separating at half past seven o'clock

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the youngsters sang God Save The King and gave hearty cheers for their host and hostess. Subsequently the adults were admitted to the grounds and spent a pleasant evening, separating about ten o'clock. During the evening selections were rendered on Mr Frank Sawyer's gramophone.

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### **Edward VII's Coronation** (*second attempt!*) **- 9 August 1902**

Most of the inhabitants decorated their house fronts for Coronation Day. A celebration of the Holy Communion took place at 8a.m. in the parish church, the Vicar (Rev. W. Nash Bricknell) being the celebrant. At eleven o'clock the Coronation Service was held, Form II being used as authorised. The hymns O God Our Help In Ages Past and All People That On Earth Do Dwell were sung. The Vicar gave a short address and the National Anthem was sung at the close. In the evening the places of business, hotels and public houses, and many of the private residences were prettily illuminated, amongst the most noticeable being the vicarage house and grounds, Dr. Thompson's residence, Mrs Stota's, the Post Office, the Red Lion Hotel and Mr Pimm's.

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### **George V's Coronation** - **22 June 1911**

Several inhabitants of Eynsham decorated their houses for Coronation Day and the local celebration took place on Friday (in fact the day after Coronation Day). The arrangements were carried out by a general committee comprising the Vicar (Rev. W. Nash Bricknell), Messrs. S. Evans, Tindall, G. Preston, P. Harper, Jesse Jeffreys and J. Batts. At twelve o'clock the old people were entertained at dinner in the National Schoolroom, which was decorated for the occasion. After dinner the health of the King and Queen was heartily drunk and tobacco for the men and tea for the women distributed. At 2.45 the children assembled at the Council Schools to the number of about 400 and headed by the Kidlington Band processioned to the Square where the National Anthem was sung, after which the march was continued by way of the Abbey Farm to Litchfield, kindly lent by Mr. Saunder, where tea was provided for the children, each of whom received a Coronation

mug. Amongst those who helped at the tea were Mrs Preston, Mrs Harper, Dr. and Mrs Cruickshank, Miss Smallhorn, Miss Anderson, the Misses Jepson, Misses Manktelow, Mrs Gibbard, Miss Hall, Miss B. Pimm and Mrs Buckingham.

A variety of sports for the children and adults followed some of the principal events being as under. Mr P. Harper was starter and Messrs T.R. Pratt, Tindall, Jeffreys and Preston being judges. 100 Yards Rat Race For Men - 1. G. Hall 2. B. Harper 3. Green. Ditto For Women - 1. N. Alexander 2. M. Harper 3. K. Breakspear. Quarter Mile Flat Race For Men - 1. G. Hall 2. A. Harper 3. J. Green. 100 Yards Flat Race For Married Women - 1. Mrs Grant 2. Mrs Lay. Obstacle Race - 1. G. Hall 2. A. Harper 3. J. Green. 100 Yards Flat Race For Men Over 60 - 1. Job Pickett. 2. James Pickett. 150 Yards Flat Race For Boys Under 15 - 1. A. Hall 2. C. Harper. Bicycle Gymkhana 1. Miss A. Pimm 2. Miss B. Pimm. Potato Race - 1. A Harper 2. G. Hall 3. R. Abode. Threadneedle Race For Single Women 1. M. Harper 2. A. Andrews 3. K. Breakspear. Sack Race - 1. G. Hall 2. G. Pimm 3. P. Harper. Slow Bicycle Race For Men - 1. G. Pimm 2. A. Hall 3. C. Harper. Ditto For Women - 1. Miss Andrews 2. Miss D. Harper.

Other amusements included climbing greasy pole for leg of mutton or value, which went to J. Bennett. Bowling For Ladies for tea service was in charge of Mrs Harper and Miss Saunder was the successful competitor. Bowling For A Pig was in charge of Mr A Jepson and the contest ended in a tie between Mr P. Wastie and T. Watkins. Refreshments were supplied by Mr Meeson of the Railway Hotel. The evening's amusements wound up with dancing to the strains of the Kidlington Prize Band.

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### **George V's Silver Jubilee** - **6 May 1935**

A fancy dress parade around the village headed by the Scouts band opened the Jubilee Celebrations. Racing and sports, Morris dancing and acrobatics by Scouts Dormer and Blunt followed in Lichfield where refreshment for everyone was provided. Later old time dances were held on Mrs Hoskins lawn and a large number of visitors saw the bonfire on Beacon Hill.

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### Jubilee Gifts:

A manager has presented to the School framed portraits of the King and Queen. Lavender border plants from the same donor have been planted by the senior boys and will be known as "Jubilee hedge".

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### George VI's Coronation - 12 May 1937

The Carnival Procession led by the Boy Scouts Band was judged by Mrs. Tighe, Dr. Tighe and Mr H. Hill. In the afternoon there was a fete in Mr Coates' field with folk dancing by the children trained by Miss L. Pimm.

After tea in the School the children received Coronation mugs and ran races. The festivities wound up with a dance at the Institute.

The prize-winners were: Decorated Motorcycle - Mr J. Fowler. Tableau "Cowboys" and "Coronation". Decorated Cycle - 1. K. Harris 2. W. Green 3. W. Freeman. Best couple - Mr and Mrs Hawtin. Costumes. Boys 1. M. Ayres 2. N. Pratley 3. L. Freeman. Girls - 1. H. Tredwell 2. D. Bryan 3. B. Hill 4. E. Harper. Couples (Open) 1. Mary and Barbara Winterbourne 2. P. and R. Evans 3. E. and H. Pimm 4. D. Pinker and J. Harris. Children's Perambulators - 1. P. Grant 2. P. Harling 3. D. Bryant 4. J. Brooks 5. J. Harwood. Perambulators (Open) D. Barnett and J. Evans, D. Parker and A. Hall. Advertisement - 1. Miss Parker 2. Miss Battersett 3. "Brylcream". Adults Costume - 1. Miss Jordan 2. Miss M. Clarke 3 (tie). Mrs Harling and B. Freeman.

Winners of the adults sports were: 100 Yards Men - 1. G. Hall 2. W. Floyd 3. J. Tibetti. Women - 1. Mrs Tredwell 2. - Pimm 3. Mrs Nash. Long Distance - 1. C. Batts 2. W. Quainton 3. L. Russell. Veterans Race - 1. W. Evans 2. Ashby 3. H. Pratley. Throwing Cricket Ball 1. E. Ayres 2. B. Wolfston 3. W. Perkins. Three-legged Race 1. Mr and Mrs Newport 2. Mrs Merry and T. Thomas 3. Mr and Mrs Bennett and Mrs Winterbourne and Mr Llewington. Fancy Dress on Horseback - 1. Mr E. Coates (sheik) 2. Mr G. Harris (Spaniard) 3. Messrs Sawyer and Finney (Aga Khan leading in winner).

Mr C. Calcutt (minus 20) defeated Mr

Ovenham (received 60) in the final of the Institute Cup. The cup was presented by Mr C. Philcox.

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### Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation - 2 June 1953

Coronation Competition - Winners in the competition organised by Mrs Roberts and Mrs Fleet of 1 and 2 Handborough Road in aid of the Coronation fund were Miss D. Hayward, Mrs M. Druce, Mrs Castle, Mrs Oxenham, Mr Hunt, Master J. Burgin, Mr B. Wheelan and Mrs Bourne.

Maypole Tomorrow (May 9) - Over 70 children from Eynsham School are to take part in Maypole dancing in the Market Square of Eynsham tomorrow afternoon and collections will be taken in aid of the Coronation Celebrations fund. There will be the ceremony of the crowning of the May Queen and some old Eynsham traditional dances will also be seen.

Mr. E. D. Thompson of The Sportsman, Eynsham, was among those who received coronation medals for work as an instructor with the Oxford Civil Defence Corps.

Coronation Celebrations - Mr C. Burgin, chairman of Eynsham's Coronation Committee, opened the celebrations at a ceremony in the Market Square, Eynsham, In the morning there had been a United Service. One of the features of the afternoon was the exhibition of maypole dancing by the children and, as well as teas for the children, old people were also given a meal.

Coronation Surplus - At the final meeting of the Coronation Committee it was decided that subject to permission the balance of £17 12s should be used to provide a seat near the church and to buy tokens for all serving members of H.M. Forces from the District.