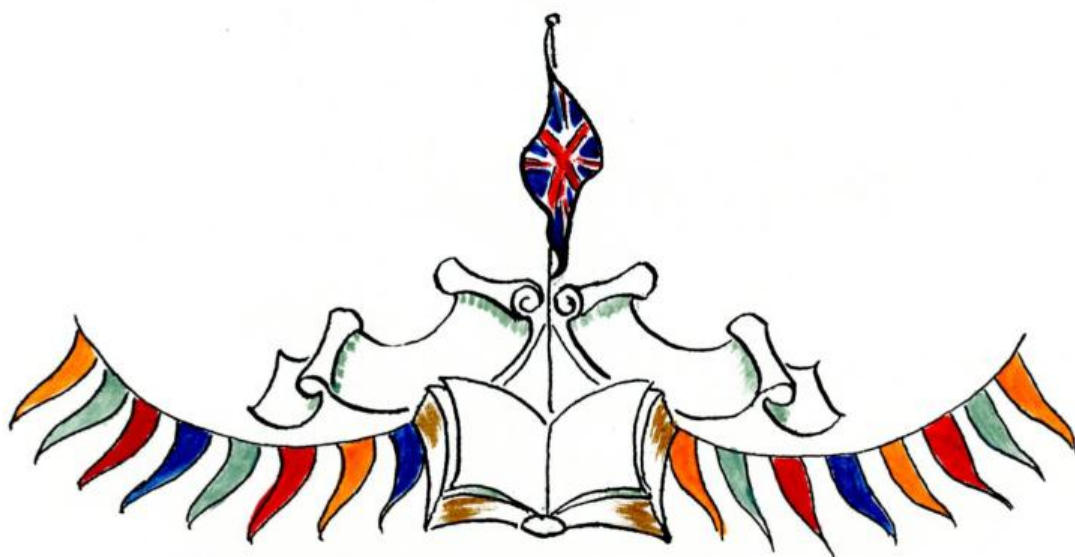


CELEBRATIONS
and
JUBILEES
in
HAREFIELD
1871~1900

(from the Middlesex Gazette)

M. Evans.



There were of course the regular Religious celebrations, with Christmas, Easter, Harvest attracting extra interest. 'Christmas Cheer' was undoubtedly increased in 1885 and 1886 by the gift of prime beef for the poor from Mr. W. Greatrex of Catherine End, Kuislip.

Mr. Newell, owner of the Paper Mill, entertained Baptists and their children in his envelope factory, with a large Christmas tree, tea and talks, music, and presents for the children. In 1880 the Wesleyans held a Children's Festival at the Crystal Palace to celebrate 100 years of their Sunday Schools.

Other regular celebrations were held by the Ancient Order of Foresters whose Victoria Court had been established in the village in 1854. They could muster 100 or more members for their procession, wearing their ribbons and carrying their banners, led

by a drum and fife band, to St. Mary's church. Later they had dinner at the Malt House, prepared by Mr Miller of the King's Arms. By 1885 they had 349 Harefield members. The Vicar usually took the chair, with secretary Charles Brown, assistant Charles Junior and Chief Ranger H. Brown.

An unusual celebration occurred in 1878 when the 43 ratepayers of the village subscribed to a presentation of cash and books to each of the 6 policemen, in recognition of their good service, especially their 'praiseworthy endurance' during a confrontation with a 'savagely violent' group now doing hard labour in prison.

In 1881 Uxbridge acquired a new 'Steamer' Fire Engine. Pulled by 4 horses, the steam pump operated the water jet. A parade with 3 other 4-horse engines, the crews wearing the new brass helmets, led by a band, assembled in Belmont Grounds where Miss Lilian Cox of Harefield Place smashed a bottle of wine and named the new engine 'Perseverence', after which she turned on the water jet. When fire struck in Harefield, someone had to run to Uxbridge or Rickmansworth to alert the fire service. When Mr. Tarleton came to Breakspears he acquired his own fire engine and trained his staff to operate it. They would often get to a fire before the official engines, which led to various disagreements about the use of hydrants.

1887 brought all the excitement of Queen Victoria's Jubilee ~ there was a dinner for 170 old people and widows in the Malt House; they had roast beef and potatoes, plum pudding and

beer. The hall was 'decked with laburnum and geraniums and the Uxbridge Brass band, 13 of them, played.' James Thompson aged 91, and Wm. Collett, 84, had both been present at George III's Jubilee. 300 children had tea in the field behind Harefield House, and games, races, cricket and dancing followed.

The next day there was a cricket match on the common between brothers Henry, 12, and James Branch, 70. 'This match had been talked about for years.' Henry was declared 'Best Man.' Fireworks and a bonfire followed, which could be seen for miles.

The Cricket Club held an annual dinner in celebration of their successes. This was held in the King's Arms ~ a convivial affair with loyal toasts and presentations ~ bats, caps for bowling, a ball for fielding ~ in 1888 Mr Kennell offered to double his sub. if they won more than half their matches.

and the postal cost depended on distance.

There were no envelopes and the direction was written on the outside. Often the writing would be crossed twice. To celebrate this Jubilee special envelopes were sold at 1/- each.

The opening ceremony of the Breakspear Institute in 1896 was performed by Miss Vernon, with music by the United Asbestos Band. It was a working men's club, with smoking room, library, and space for a bowling green.

In August 1897, rather late, Mr. Tarleton gave a special Jubilee Treat for the children. 450 of them marched to Breakspears for tea on the lawns, with singing, Punch and Judy, and games. Each child was given an unbreakable Jubilee mug.

On May 24, 1900, Harefield celebrated the Relief of Mafeking. It was also the Queen's birthday, and Ascension Day. The Rev. Harland held a service in the Memorial Hall, followed by

a torchlight procession and bonfire." The Vicar and Mrs. Harland walked through the long line of the procession and no-one would have guessed the heavy tribute they had paid in the death of their gallant son Edwin ~ only one British officer was killed and that a son of Harefield."

The village was decorated with flags and bunting and the procession was headed by four men on horseback followed by others on bicycles, Mr Tarleton's fire engine and a wagon carrying ladies dressed as Red Cross nurses, and the musical inhabitants with various instruments. £7 was collected for the Making Fund.

