

**LOCAL WWI PEACE DAY CELEBRATIONS  
JUNE 19th 1919**



**Celebrations in London**

**BY SAMUEL T STEWART - FEBRUARY 2025**

When World War I began in August 1914, few expected the conflict to last beyond Christmas. Over the course of the next few months, however, it was clear this would not come to pass. The conflict, already expanded beyond Europe, included great movements of imperial colonies in Africa and Asia. As it progressed, further independent nations like Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, the Ottoman Empire, China and Japan joined the fighting. Not until 1918 would the war's end be in sight. In October of that year, an armistice between the Ottoman Empire and the Allies ended fighting in the Middle East. Only days later, the disintegrating Austro-Hungarian Empire signed an armistice with Italy.

Fighting on the Western Front ceased with the Armistice on 11 November 1918, which was signed between the Axis and Allies ending the First World War. but hostilities with Germany did not end officially until the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919. In Britain, peace was celebrated on 19 July that year, with a **Victory Parade in London as the main event.**

The armistice was the culmination of a coordinated Allied offensive extending across the western front, a distance of more than 400 miles. Faced with this overwhelming advance, the Germans were driven back from the territory they had fought hard to acquire over four long years of war. With the situation looking increasingly dire with every passing day, the Germans dispatched a diplomatic delegation to the front.

On the morning of November 11<sup>th</sup> in Compiègne, France, an armistice was reached between the Allies and Germany, declaring a cessation to hostilities on the western front effective the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, of the 11<sup>th</sup> of day, of the 11<sup>th</sup> month.



**Photograph of General Maxime Weygand of France, Admiral Wemyss of Great Britain and Marshal Foch of France, along with others involved with the Armistice, in the Forest of Compiègne on November 11, 1918, outside the railcar where the Armistice was negotiated.**

**The King and the Government agreed that a public holiday should be declared for July 19<sup>th</sup> 1919 in order for WWI Peace Day celebrations to take place all over the country**

**The following information was transcribed from the Coalville Times -  
Friday July 25th 1919**

### **PEGG'S GREEN**

The inhabitants of Pegg's Green celebrated victory and peace in right royal fashion, old and young having a very good time. The fancy parade was one of the interesting items of the programme, causing much excitement and amusement as people recognised friends through the disguise of paint and powder.

The judges, Mr Measures, Miss Trussell, Mrs Knighton and Mr Danvers, awarded first prizes to "Hospital Ward" (Mrs Harvey and party) and the comic band to (Mr Edwards, Mr Shepherd and party).

Other prize winners were: Miss E. Crosen, as a nursemaid, with baby and perambulator; "Darby and Joan" (Misses C. Fewkes and F. Smith); "Rags and Bobs", (Herbert and George Elliott); and "Field Ambulance" (Wilfred Wilton, Misses E. Wilton and E. Davies).

After a procession through the village, the school children were entertained to tea, and later, 50 old residents and disabled soldiers partook of a meat tea. There was also a public meat tea for other residents.

Sports of great variety, organised by Miss Trussell, Mr Measures and Mr Danvers took place in the evening, the prizes being both handsome and numerous. In the races for older people, Mrs Richards won a handsome teapot, while Mr J. Wilton won a pipe and tobacco.

Light refreshments, sweets and nuts, given to the children, with a short display of fireworks, closed the proceedings of a very happy and successful day.

### **COLEORTON**

The Coalville Coronation Band headed a procession at Coleorton, where the children afterwards had tea in the school, and then went to the Hall field for games and sports.

The arrangements also included a bonfire and fireworks and the Band played for dancing. The picturesque grounds of the Hall were a scene of much animation, a meat tea being provided there for the discharged and demobilised soldiers and sailors.

The cost was met by the voluntary contributions of the villagers, there being a splendid response both in money and kind to the appeal of the committee, of which the Rev. H. Robinson (Rector) was chairman, and Mrs Tabor (Coleorton Hall) secretary. There were several decorations in the village, and a good display of flags.

### **SWANNINGTON**

There were some novel and interesting features in the doings at Swannington. The children paraded the village in the afternoon and great amusement was caused by the comic characters in the procession. Prizes were offered for the best fancy dress and these were won by the following:

Girls: 1 Emily Fox; 2 Gertrude Gilbert and Dorothy Jones; 3 Ruby Tranthem.  
Boys: 1 J. Springthorpe and C. Jones; 2 A Walker; 3 A. Brewin.

Tea was provided for the children at the National School, and a sports programme in the recreation ground followed. There was also a large sitting down to a public meat tea.

During the afternoon, an effigy of the Kaiser (for which Mr Jones won a prize in the procession) hung from a gibbet in the field, and a notice was attached, bearing these words, "Kaiser Bill will be executed tonight at 8 o'clock; no flowers by request."

An enthusiastic committee, with Mr Henry Jinks, as chairman, and Mr G. Holloway, secretary, carried out the arrangements and collected the necessary money from the parishioners, from whom there was a good response.

After the procession in the afternoon, a short address was given by the Vicar, the Rev. G. Robinson, in the field. **Before going home the children received buns.**

## BELTON

Although Belton has suffered somewhat heavily in the war, and has given the lives of nine of her gallant sons in the struggle, the villagers entered whole-heartedly into the celebrations.

The Vicar (Rev. H. C. Deane), members of the Parish Council, Mr Albert Moore, R.D.C., and a large number of ladies, had for some time been working out the arrangements for the day, with the result that a successful demonstration, gay with a profuse display of British and Allied colours, was followed by a substantial repast to the demobilised soldiers, the aged people, and the children.

## RAVENSTONE

The procession at Ravenstone was led by Major Hatchett, J.P., Mrs Hatchett and party in a conveyance, and the Hugglescote Town Band. Some amusement was caused by a number of residents in comic dress, who afterwards played a cricket match in Mr H. M. Hewes' field (kindly lent), where the sports took place.

Tea was served to the children on the field and the old people, widows and ex-servicemen sat down to a good tea in the school.

Major Hatchett was president, and the Rev. A. S. Dowling (Rector) chairman of the committee, with Mr George Harris, secretary, and the money they received in voluntary contributions was ample to meet the cost.

## NEW SWANNINGTON

Prizes offered for the best house and street decorations at New Swannington, caused the villagers to vie with one another in their efforts to produce the best result, and it produced a capital effect on the whole.

For street decorations, the winners were:

1 Mrs Holmes; 2 Mrs Pollard; 3 Mrs Rowell.

For house decorations: 1 Mrs Billings; 2 Mrs Bath; 3 Mrs Williamson; 4 Mrs S. Kendrick and 5 Mrs North.

Messrs. T. Kendrick, George Hardy and T. Henney acted as judges.

The children marched to the Whitwick Market Place and back via Church Lane. A comic band led the procession and much fun was created by a fancy dress parade, for which prizes were awarded. The following were the winners of prizes in the parade:

Horseback: 1 Mr A. Bayliss (Dick Turpin); 2 Miss E. Holmes (Robin Hood); 3 Mr A. Williamson (Clown).

Vehicle: 1 Miss E. Brown and party (V.A.D.); 2 Miss A. Taylor and party (Britannia); 3 Miss Waterfield.

Comic: 1 Mr F. Smith (Demobilised); 2 Mr L. Smith (Charlie Chaplin); 3 Mr T. Rowell (New Woman).

Original: 1 Mrs Bayley (Scotchman); 2 Mrs J. Mundy (House Wanted); 3 Mrs E. Shepherd (Nurse).

Children's Fancy Dress: 1 Connie King; 2 Edith Smith; 3 Freda Smith.

Boats: 1 Master G. Mundy; 2 Master H. Waterfield; 3 Master D. Bradley.

Children's Carriage: 1 W. Mundy; 2 A. Billings; 3 M. Henson.

Children's Cycle: 1 A. Waterfield; 2 Louie Henson; 3 S. Waterfield.

Tea was served to the children (over 200) in Mr Bath's field, and there was a spread for the ex-service men, a public tea at a nominal charge also being attended by over 220 residents.

A good sports programme was afterwards carried out and Mr Palmer, of the Queen's Head, Thornborough, greatly pleased the youngsters by lending his donkey for free rides.

Mr O. Geary was chairman of the local committee, with Mr A. Webster, secretary, and Mr F. Bradley, treasurer. They were greatly encouraged by the response to their appeal for money for the event, this little hamlet raising over £21 for the purpose.

## **THRINGSTONE**

Thringstone children paraded in the school yard at two o'clock, and marched to the Village Hall where an excellent tea for them was provided at three o'clock. At four o'clock the old people, ex-service men and others had their repast and at five o'clock there was a public tea at a charge of 2/- per head.

The evening was devoted to sports in Mr Illsley's field, and a short devotional service.

The cost of the festivities was borne by voluntary contributions.

## **IBSTOCK**

The children from the various Sunday Schools at Ibstock, met in Church Avenue, on Saturday afternoon and, after being marshalled in order of procession, proceeded along High Street, Chapel Street, Melbourne Road and Crown Lane round the village. It was one of the best processions ever seen in Ibstock. Upwards of sixteen hundred children took part, headed by the Excelsior Band, under Bandmaster Chas. Godfrey, and the Church Lads Brigade Bugle Band. The Rector (the Rev. A. H. Birks, M.A.) the Baptist pastor (the Rev. Henry Cowling), Councillor W. Eggington, J.P., Messrs. W. Dunstan and F. W. Stevens, assisted by member of the Peace Committee and Sunday School teachers, marshalled the procession, which was nearly half a mile in length, and included many decorated vehicles conveying the infants.

Miss Irene Howitt, Church Sunday School, and Miss Thurza Grey, Wesleyan Sunday School, carried a banner bearing the words, "Welcome Boys; thank you Boys; God bless you Boys" at the head of the Sunday Schools, and there was a fine display of flags and other banners with appropriate wordings, carried by the other scholars.

At various points en route the children sang the hymns and patriotic songs, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts", "What can I do for England?" and the National Anthem, Mr F. W. Stevens conducting.

The Rector conveyed the King's message of gratitude to the soldiers and sailors on the conclusion of peace, and three cheers were raised by the children at the conclusion of the singing.

After the procession, the children were given a tea at the respective Sunday Schools and later proceeded to a field off Locker's Lane, kindly lent by Mr Wm. Rowell, where races and games had been arranged, but owing to the weather turning showery, this was abandoned, and the children were recalled to their schools where they received buns and chocolate.

Ibstock was gaily decorated for the peace rejoicings with streamers and bunting, and in Chapel Street, the effigy of the Kaiser was burned later in the evening.

In connection with the peace celebrations, the old people and widows were entertained to tea and concert in the National Schools on Monday. The large room was made particularly inviting by a display of bunting and floral decorations, and after a substantial tea, the men regaled themselves with tobacco, and the women with chocolates, which were presented to them.

The Rev. A. H. Birks, M.A., presided over the concert in the evening, and extended a hearty welcome to the guests with an expression of sympathy for those who had suffered bereavement as the result of the terrible war which was now, happily, over.

Songs and recitations were contributed by the following and were heartily appreciated by the audience:

Messrs. J. J. Sparrow, W. Morton, W. T. Humble, W. Ottey, P. Bourne, J. Plant, Mrs Bourne, Miss Clarke and Miss Grey.

Votes of thanks were passed and heartily accorded, on the proposition of Councillor W. Eggington, seconded by Mr W. Dunstan.

## **HUGGLESCOTE**

Hugglescote on Saturday had one of the finest processions ever seen in the parish. Prizes were offered for the best fancy dress and many of the children were splendidly "got up," while the youngsters generally were beautifully dressed, and with their flags and banners, made a happy throng. In the absence of the local bands, which had accepted engagements elsewhere, Mr T. Bird and Mr R. Cartwright, two old bandsmen, got together a number of their former comrades, and made up an excellent band, which led the procession. This included the Church Lad's Brigade, and two jazz bands organised by boys, which created much amusement.

Canon Broughton (vicar), the Rev. C. Barker (Baptist minister) and the staffs of the two day schools also took part in the procession, of which Mr Fellows, headmaster of the Council Schools, had charge.

Patriotic songs were sung by the children at The Green, at Donington and at Wilkin's Lane, Mr J. Garrett conducting.

After the procession the children went to a field opposite the Baptist Cemetery, kindly lent by Mr J. B. Simons, and were provided with an excellent tea, over a thousand being entertained. The arrangement of the tea was undertaken by the Hugglescote Soldiers' and Sailors' Gift Fund Committee, of which Mr F. J. Wainwright (Church School headmaster) is secretary, and the various religious denominations assisted by sending helpers. The cost was borne by voluntary contributions, which also allowed about £16 to be allocated for sports prizes, Mr J. H. Dean acting as the sports secretary. Unfortunately the sports programme was cut short by the wet weather.

A tea to the old people of the parish on a later date is contemplated.