

MALTON GALA

ITS FIFTY YEARS' HISTORY

The Malton Messenger, Saturday July 17th 1909

Time was when Malton had three flower shows a year – its spring, summer, and autumn shows, all held in the Assembly Room. The society that carried these on lasted several years, and then, like most other things, came to an end. It lasted, we believe, from 1837 to 1848. The late Mr John Slater had a good deal to do with the management of this society and its shows, which for a time flourished well. Then in 1855, when the Yorkshire Agricultural Show was held at Malton (the first time here), a flower show was got up and held in the Lodge Grounds. The Yorkshire Show was held in the Orchard Field, and admission to the flower show was through a door in the wall straight out of the showyard. Mr M.B. Slater was the secretary that time, and the show was quite a success, a nice balance being left.

In 1859 an attempt was being made to unite Malton with the Ryedale and Pickering Agricultural Society, but that failed. A meeting with that object had been held on Saturday, February 26th, 1859, and on the Monday night after, a meeting was held to consider the resuscitation of the Floral and Horticultural Society. Promises of support came in from the Hon. C.W.W. Fitzwilliam and Mr James Brown, the M.P.'s for the borough, as well as from Lord Feversham, Col. Duncombe, the Rev. Chas. Hall (Terrington), the Rev. W. Carter (Slingsby), the Rev. T.H. Croft (Hutton Buscel), the Rev F.W. Douglas (Scrayingham) and others.

There was already a Horticultural Society which held its shows alternately at Helmsley, Kirbymoorside, and Hovingham, which held its second annual meeting in April, 1859, and its third show at Hovingham in August; York Gala had just got established, Driffild had that year its sixth floral and poultry show, and Coxwold also had its flower show.

The first general meeting of the Malton Society was held at the literary Institute on Monday evening, May 23rd, 1859, and Earl Fitzwilliam was elected president. Captain Copperthwaite, Mr (now Sir) C.W. Strickland and the Rev. W. Carter, vice-presidents; Mr John Smith, of the York Union Bank, treasurer; and Mr Edawrd

Taylor (florist and seedsman) secretary, with the assistance of the late Mr John Marshall (for the musical department). The first show was fixed for Wednesday, August 31st, but no site was then agreed upon, it being left for further consideration whether it should be held in a tent or in a room. It was afterwards decided to hold it in the Lodge Grounds, by permission of Captain Copperthwaite – and there it continued to be held until 1879, when the Hon H.W. and Lady Mary Fitzwilliam having come to reside at the Lodge, the grounds themselves were somewhat altered, more flower beds, &c., being laid out, and there was no room for the Gala, which from that time has been held in the adjoining Orchard Field.

THE FIRST GALA

Was held, as above stated, on Wednesday, August 31st, 1859, and from the report of it in the *Messenger* of the 3rd September that year it appears a lot of rain had fallen in the morning, but it began to clear up about noon, and from two o'clock it was tolerably fine for the remainder of the day, and about 2,000 people were present.

A band contest was held that year, and five bands had entered – Saltaire, Malton and Norton Saxhorn, Malton United, Whitby Cliff, and Loftouse. The first prize went to Saltaire, second to Malton and Norton Saxhorn, third to Whitby, fourth to Malton United, and fifth to Lofthouse.

A list of the principal exhibitors at the first gala will be of interest. They were given in the *Messenger* as follows:-

| Gardener | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| General Norcliffe, Langton | George Agar |
| H.B. Darley, Esq. Aldby Park | R. Reed |
| Sir W. Worsley, Bart, Hovingham | J. Featherstone |
| Sir E.H. Lechmere, Bart, Whitwell | J. Cowburn |
| Robert Bower, Esq., Welham | John Coates |
| Capt. Overston, Moorby Hall | Thos. Rogers |
| Rev. C. Hall, Terrington | W. Hemmings |
| Rev. E. Trueman, Grimston | J. Cotson |
| Lord Middleton, Birdsall | J. Hawkins |
| Miss Starkey, Hutton | Geo. Brodie |
| L. Thompson, esq., Sheriff Hutton | J. Pallister |
| W.C. Copperthwaite, Esq., Malton | J. Reed |
| R Wise, Esq., Auburn Hill | Henry Wragg |
| Thos Walker, Esq., Old Malton | Thomas Ward |
| Hirst Walker, Esq., Norton Grange | J. Richardson |
| Henry Jackson, Esq., Malton | M. Hildreth |
| J.S. Sigston, Esq., Malton | J. Greenwood |

Messrs G. Longster, Malton; W. Lovel, helperthorpe; Goodwin, York; Robt. Stabler, Malton; Geo. Houlton, York; Charles Walker, Malton; James Horsley, Norton; W.T. Colby, Malton; J. Johnson, Fridaythorpe; F. Mitchell, Grimston; Hought, Hull; Geo. Harrison, Hull; Lotherington, Hull; A. Simpson, Malton; J. Bearbank, Cottingham; J.W. Jordan, Eastburn; Joseph Williamson, Driffield; George Pinkney, Whitewall; W. Lucas, Malton; John Battle, Ganton; John Hopkins, Malton; John Smith, Normanby; W. Beadnell, Helmsley; George Craig, Helmsley; John Taylor, Scagglethorpe; Geo. Ickes, Halton; Michael Rogers, Rufforth, C. Monkman, Malton.

From this it would appear that Dr W.T. Colby is the only gentleman living who exhibited at our first gala. He seems to have taken no prizes on that occasion, but since then he has frequently been in the winning list. Once he took a prize with some lapstone potatoes, and somebody stole them, but that was not the last he saw of them, for some time afterwards, attending a patient at Welburn, he was presented with some potatoes of a new variety, grown as seedlings from his own stolen prize-winners.

The names of most of the exhibitors named above appeared in the prize list of 1859.

The judges that year were:- Plants and flowers – Mr Wright, gardener to the Archbishop of York, and Mr Morrison, gardener to Sir Wm. Milner, Bart., of Nun Appleton. Fruit and vegetables – Mr Potts, gardener to Sir Tatton Sykes, Bart., Sledmere; and Mr Craig, York. Cottagers' Produce – Mr Hawkins, gardener to Lord Middleton, Birdsall; and Mr John Coates, gardener to Robert Bower, Esq., Welham.

At the annual meeting in 1860, the report stated that there were 140 members, that there had been 85 exhibitors at the show, and that 2,000 people were present. The prize money paid was £44 12s 6d, and there was a balance in hand of £17 3s 5d. Mr T. Wray and Mr G Barnby, jun., were then appointed secretaries. Next year Mr Wray's name was the only one that appeared, and he continued the secretaryship till 1903, when he resigned owing to age, and was succeeded by Mr W. Barker, who still holds the office. Mr Wray had previously had the assistance of Mr Walter Stubbs, Mr D.J. Wilson, and Mr Barker in a few preceding years; and his son, Mr G.W. Wray, had done

a great deal of the work in Mr Wray's last year of office. At the show of 1903 Mr Wray was too ill to attend, and his place was taken by his son, with the assistance of Mr Barker. The latter gentleman was elected secretary at the annual meeting on the 21st October 1903. He had been associated with the society in one way and another for 20 years.

LIST OF PRESIDENTS

The presidents since the formation of the society have been as follows:-

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|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1859 Earl Fitzwilliam | 1885 Rev. EAB Pitman |
| 1860 Lord feversham | 1886 Capt. CJ Russell |
| 1861 Hon CWW Fitzwilliam, MP | 1887 Mr Wm. l'Anson |
| 1862 Lord Middleton | 1888 Mr HW Pearson |
| 1863 Col St Quintin | 1889 Mr R Metcalfe |
| 1864 Mr James Brown, MP | 1890 Mr R Metcalfe |
| 1865 Mr RH Bower, JP | 1891 Lieut-Col JD Legard |
| 1866 Capt Copperthwaite | 1892 Sir WC Worsley, Bart |
| 1867 Lieut-Col Haworth | 1893 Mr HD Harrison |
| 1868 Earl Fitzwilliam | 1894 Mr W Bethell, JP |
| 1869 Sir G.O. Wombwell | 1895 Mr Robt. Boulton |
| 1870 Mr HC Manisty, QC | 1896 Major CJ Russell |
| 1871 Mr EV Harcourt, JP | 1897 Mr WS Sprent |
| 1872 No Show | 1898 Mr Gervase Markham |
| 1873 Hon E Willoughby | 1899 Mr Wm. l'Anson |
| 1874 Capt Copperthwaite | 1900 Mr HW Pearson |
| 1875 Mr Joseph Marshall, JP | 1901 Mr WW Lupton, JP |
| 1876 Mr WH St Quintin, JP | 1902 Dr WT Colby, JP |
| 1877 Capt CJ Russell | 1903 Mr J Grant Lawson, MP |
| 1878 Mr Wm l'Anson | 1904 Earl Fitzwilliam |
| 1879 Mr T Preston | 1905 Captain Behrens |
| 1880 Hon HW Fitzwilliam | 1906 Viscount Helmsley, MP |
| 1881 Mr AJ Cholmley, JP | 1907 Mr WH St Quintin |
| 1882 Dr WT Colby | 1908 Major M Sykes |
| 1883 Mr WH Rose | 1909 Earl Fitzwilliam |
| 1884 Mr Wm Simpson | |

In 1891, Mr Robert Metcalfe was elected deputy president and chairman of committees, an office which he still continues to fill with great ability.

THE BALLOON ASCENTS

There have been balloon ascents on many occasions during the fifty years. The first was in 1860 by Mr Coxwell, the greatest aeronaut of his time. He took up with him Captain Potter, of Terrington, and Mr Ewbank, of Dalby, and they came down, after a good voyage, at Sherburn. In 1861 Mr Coxwell went up again, taking Mr Ewbank with him, and they landed near Kirby Grindalythe. In 1870 there was a balloon ascent by Mr Coxwell, who with another gentleman went up in the afternoon, and came down a little beyond Leppington. There was not another balloon

ascent until 1885, when Mr Beatson, of Huddersfield, went up in a balloon in which Col. F. Burnaby crossed the English Channel. He came down near Scarborough. In 1886 Mr Beatson again ascended, taking with him a Mr Potter, of Huddersfield, and Mr E. J. Brockway, an employee of the Malton Gas Company. They had a somewhat perilous voyage, and in descending they were dragged for about two miles, smashing through fences and carrying a five-barred gate across a field. They landed on the farm of Mr Wellburn, at Helperthorpe, after going thirteen miles in thirteen minutes, and were all three more or less injured.

In 1887, Mr Whelan, of Huddersfield, was engaged to make the balloon ascent, and Mr Charles King, Malton, went with him. They descended at Burnby, near Pocklington. In 1888, Mr Whelan went up again, taking with him Mr M. F. W Williamson & Mr Harold Baker, of Malton. They came down at Harton, near Barton-le-Willows.

In 1889, Mr Orton, of London, was engaged to make a balloon ascent and parachute descent. He came down beautifully with his parachute in a barley field of Mr Digby Cayley's, at Norton Grove.

In 1890 and three succeeding years Mr Whelan was the aeronaut. In the first of these four years Miss Maud Brooke went up with him and made a parachute descent between Sutton House and Spring Cottage, and the balloon came down at Langton. The next year when Miss Niagara was to have made the parachute descent, the wind was so strong that the balloon was torn whilst filling, and no ascent could be made. In 1892 Mr Whelan went up alone, and dropped a paper representation of a parachutist. The balloon came down at Mr Milner's, Howe Bridge. In 1893 the wind was too strong for any ascent to be made.

In 1894, and for three years after, Lieut Lempriere, of Birmingham, was engaged **missing** he came down at Scampston. In 1895 he went up in the evening, and came down on Mr R. Yates's farm at Whitewall. In 1896 he took Mr A.E. rose up with him, and they came down in a field of Mr Atkinson's, Heselton Wold; and in 1897 the balloon burst before it was quite filled. In 1896 there was to have been a captive balloon ascent, but the breeze was too strong.

Since then there have been five ascents, all by the Messrs. Spencer, of London – in 1898, 1899, 1900,

1904, and 1908. In 1898 Mr Spencer was accompanied by Mr D.J. Wilson, of Malton, and they descended near Cayton Bay. In 1899 Mr D.J. Wilson and Mr Jonas Dawson accompanied the aeronaut, and they landed near the Mausoleum at Castle Howard. In 1900 Mr D.J. Wilson (then assistant secretary of the Gala) was the only one to go with Mr Spencer, and they came down at the Grange Farm, Market Weighton.

In 1904, the passengers were Mr Vernon Wragge (then Lord Mayor of York), Messrs C. Scaife, E. Cox, and F. Taylor, of Malton. After a voyage of nearly two hours they landed in a field of Mr W. Coleman's, of North Burton, near Hunmanby.

Last year Mr Spencer took with him Mrs Mark Sykes (wife of the president), Miss Gorst (her sister), Mr Thurley Rose, and Mr G.W. Brown, of Malton. They had a fine ride, and came down near Ellerburne.

THE BAND CONTESTS, &c.

There have been band contests at the gala on ten different occasions – in 1859, 1860, 1861, 1883, 1884, 1886, 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1908.

The first year's contest is recorded above. In 1860 the First North York Rifle Band took first, Driffild Rifles second, and Malton United third. Three bands had entered, but one of them could not come, so the secretary got the Malton United to come on the ground, as well as the Malton Volunteers and the Driffild Volunteers. In 1861 there was a contest for village bands, Swinton taking first and Scagglethorpe second. There was not another contest till 1883, when Black Dike took first, Linthwaite second, and Scarborough Rifles third. Black Dike took first again in 1884, and the other bands who played were disqualified. Honley and Littleborough wished to have the second selections abandoned, to enable them to get home that night, but Black Dike objected. The other two refused to go on, and the result was as just stated.

In 1886 Wyke Old Band got first, Wyke Temperance second, and Leeds Forge third. Black Dike had entered, but had an engagement at Edinburgh, and did not turn up. In 1901 Batley Old Band was placed first, Wyke second, West Hartlepool Operatic third, and West Hartlepool Borough fourth. Wyke got first in 1902 for both selection and quickstep, Batley second, and Black

Dike third. In 1903 Scarboro' Rifles came first, Scarbro' Borough second, York City third, and Castle Howard Reformatory fourth.

In 1904 there was no contest, but the Batley Old Band played. In 1905 there was a military tournament instead of a band contest, by the 18th Hussars.

In 1906 the same regiment gave another tournament; in 1907 the Yorkshire Hussars gave a similar entertainment; and in 1908 we had another band contest, Batley Old taking first, Hull Sons of Temperance second, Earby third, Scarbro' Artillery fourth, and Malton White Star fifth.

In 1862 there was a military entertainment and assault-at-arms by Professor Gregory and assistants, which was a somewhat disappointing affair. There was also an open-air concert by 800 children, and an eminent magician had been engaged. The well-known Indian runner, Deerfoot, was in the town the same day, and he got 3,000 people to see him run in a field in Middlecave. In the next few years there were musical and other entertainments. In 1870 there were some hand bell ringers from Halifax.

In 1871 the first poultry show was held. In 1879, grotesque balloons were sent up in the afternoon. In 1880 dogs were shown for the first time. In the evening a hay stack in the Lodge grounds was burnt by a spark from the fireworks. In 1881 Malton Athletic Club gave an entertainment.

In 1889, when Mr R. Metcalfe was president for the first time, the day was so terribly wet that the ball, fireworks, and balloon ascent were postponed till the next day. In 1904 a cake-walk competition was held, which proved so poor an affair that it has never been attempted since.

THE FINANCES

The society has had many ups and downs in its fifty years' existence in the matter of finances. In the first year the subscriptions amounted to £59 19s 6d, the prize money to £44 12s 6d, and the receipts at the gate £59 6s 3d, whilst there was a balance left in hand of £17. In the second year all these sums went up, the subscriptions being £75 4s, the prize money £51 3s 6d, and the receipts at the gate £209 6s. The subscriptions two years later were £81 14s, the prize money £91 11s,

and the gate receipts £190 14s 6d. After that the amounts varied somewhat, the subscriptions being a little less, the prize money more, and the receipts generally less, except in 1867, when they came to £230 10s, and 1869, £234 14s. As the report for 1903 stated, the society was carried on with more or less success till 1874, when, owing to the weather, there was an adverse balance of 14s 10d. In 1898 there was a balance against the society of £1 8s, and after the 1902 show, the balance to the bad was £9. The highest balance in the bank was in 1903, £238 12s 6d. The greatest loss was in 1902, £161, and in 1889 there was a deficit of £140. The highest amount ever taken at the gates was £381 10s in 1893, and the lowest £59 6s 3d in 1859. In 1903 there was a loss of £13 3s, but in 1904 there was a small profit of £7 0s 2d, but adding £25 for the band stand then purchased it was about £32.

In 1862 there was a balance in hand of £181. In 1874, with 14s 10d to the bad, the bankers wanted to know who was going to guarantee the deficiency. In 1888 there was £204 5s 11d in hand. In 1893 there was the record balance in hand of £240, but then came some bad years, and in 1898 they only had a capital of 13s. In 1901 there was the second record gate, £241. In 1902 the whole of the balance in hand of £152 disappeared and there was an adverse balance of £8 6s 2d. In 1904 there was about £100 in hand, but in 1905 this was reduced to £7 15s.

In 1906 a change of date was made, from August to July, and this is being continued. After the gala of that year there was a balance at the bank of £203 16s 4d, the subscriptions having amounted to £94 12s, special donations, sale of work and jumble sale to £128 12s 10d, and gate receipts to £255 14s 9d; whilst the prize money came to £137 16s 6d.

Last year the subscriptions came to £100 17s 3d, the gate and stand receipts to £199 18s 3d, prize money £173 1s, and the balance in hand was £201 14s 5d.

That the Gala may have a long series of successful years is the wish of every Maltonian and of everyone who has any love for the happy old town.