



Coronations 1838-1953

Note: This article contains quotations which include some language of its time which is not acceptable today and should be read within its historical context.

Introduction

Following the death of the late Queen Elizabeth II in 2022, this year, 2023, sees the coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6th May 2023. The occasion will be marked both locally and nationally, but how did we mark previous coronations?

Queen Victoria's Coronation (28 June 1838)

Queen Victoria was just nineteen when she was crowned Queen in Westminster Abbey on Thursday 28 June 1838, having ascended the throne the previous year on the death of her Uncle, William IV. The Coronation service took five hours, with only Lord John Thynne, Sub Dean of Westminster acting for the Dean, knowing the exact format for the occasion. There appear to have been a number of mishaps in the under-rehearsed ceremony - the Coronation ring was forced onto her incorrect finger by the Archbishop of Canterbury which in Victoria's words, resulted in "causing the greatest difficulty in taking it off again, which I at last succeeded in doing, but not without great pain"¹; the elderly Lord Rolle fell down the steps while attempting to pay homage to the Queen and a Bishop wrongly informed the Queen the ceremony was over, necessitating her return to her seat for its completion. Crowds flocked to London to witness the procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey and the return after the service. Catering and entertainment were provided for the crowds and there was a huge fair in Hyde Park. A firework display was held in Green Park the night after the ceremony.

But how did we celebrate in Battle? The *Sussex Advertiser* describes the event in its edition published on 2 July 1838:

"The coronation day was celebrated right merrily here. The band paraded the streets, a royal salute was fired from the Abbey guns, and flags were hoisted from the church and other lofty situations. At four o'clock a large party sat down to a sumptuous dinner at the George Inn, R. Young esq. in the chair. In the evening the public were treated to a display of fire-works, after having been amused by various rustic sports. We are happy to add, that the inmates of the Union² received a good dinner of roast beef and plum pudding."

On Sept 11th 1933 the *Sussex Express* recalled the events of 1838, providing a few further details. Apparently inhabitants were woken by the local band playing the National Anthem.

¹ [Material relating to the Coronation of Queen Victoria | The British Library \(bl.uk\)](#)

² Union, of course, refers to the Workhouse



The church bells were rung and the Royal Standard was hoisted on the church steeple and the Webster family arms on a Union Jack was displayed on the Abbey Gateway. The Dinner at the George at 4pm was courtesy of Mr Richardson.

Edward VII's Coronation (9 August 1902)

The original date for the coronation had been set as 26 June 1902. However, the King suffered appendicitis a few days before and had to reluctantly postpone the coronation to enable a life-saving operation to take place. His wife Alexandra was crowned Queen during the same ceremony which took place on Saturday 9th August at Westminster Abbey³. As well as being crowned King and Queen of the United Kingdom and British Dominions, they were crowned Emperor and Empress of India. The ceremony reflected the might of the British Empire, which was then at its height. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Frederick Temple, was elderly by that time and the text of the service had to be produced for him in giant type so that he could read it. He was unable to rise after kneeling to pay homage and placed the crown on the King's head the wrong way round!

Once again, Battle, as with other towns and villages, had organised its own celebrations. The *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 2 August 1902 reported the plans for festivities in Battle which had been organised by the "Coronation Committee"⁴, chaired by Captain Ellice. There would be sports for children between 1.30pm and 3.30pm, with children gathering at Battle and Langton School at 1pm to march in a procession headed by the Fife and Drum Band. As the children had been given their Coronation Tea and the adults had had their Coronation dinner on the original date of 26th June, it was decided that, as there were still enough funds, there would be "Meat Teas" for adults and children. At 3.30pm there would be a "Meat Tea" for children at the Drill Hall, to which they were to bring their own mugs. This would be followed by a "Meat Tea" for adults at 5.30pm. Tickets for the teas could be obtained from Arthur Kemp, the Headteacher of Battle and Langton School, in advance. Sports for Adults would take place after 5.30pm, followed by an illuminated cycle parade. A grand display of fireworks would conclude the proceedings at 9pm on the Market Green. The Abbey Gateway would be illuminated and all residents of Battle encouraged to illuminate and decorate their homes.

The planned festivities went off well, according to the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 16 August 1902, which notes that "The day was ushered in with a joyous peel from the belfry tower of the Parish Church at 6am" which no doubt woke many residents! Homes were decorated with flags of all sorts, fairy lamps and Chinese and Japanese lanterns, which

³ The coronation can be viewed at [Coronation Of Edward Vii \(1902\) - YouTube](#)

⁴ Members of the Coronation Committee: Rev Spencer Day, Messrs E Bannister, R Barton, G Cook, F Cruttenden, W L Deane, A A B Dewing, J Dengate, F W Read, M H Hoad, J H Kergan, E J Rayner, W W Syivester, A Saunders, F Sheppard, L W Smith, J Soan, F G Ticehurst, G Valet, and Owen Watts. Mr C Headland was the Hon Treasurer and Mr A Kemp the Hon Secretary.



“added materially to the general effect”. A Coronation Service was held in the Parish Church at 11am, which was very well attended and took the form of a “modified form of the Coronation Office”. The processional hymn was “O God of Bethel”. The Dean, the Very Rev E R Currie, wore his scarlet gown as a Doctor of Divinity, the Litany was intoned by Rev G G Wilkinson with responses by the choir; Wilkinson read the Epistle and the Dean the Gospel after which the Nicene Creed was sung by the choir to a setting by Sebastian Wesley. Zadoc the Priest, composed for the coronation of George II, was sung “in a most perfect manner”, with the prelude “brilliantly executed by the organist, Mr Bertram Weller”. The Dean read the proclamation of the King from the Chancel steps, after which the National Anthem was sung. The Dean’s address was on the topic of answered prayer, noting that prayers for the King’s recovery from his appendicitis had been answered and praying that the new King be endowed with God’s greatest gift, that of the Holy Spirit. The service closed with the hymn “Now Thank We All Our God”.

The sports took place on “Mr Christmas’s Field”, where the children’s sports were “enthusiastically carried out” and the adult sports “caused even more amusement than those of the younger generation”, in particular the “Dutch Cheese Races”. During the afternoon John Dunn, the Postmaster, who witnessed the returning of the King and Queen to Buckingham Palace, sent a telegram to Mr Kemp to confirm that the Coronation had taken place and this was “greeted with loyal and enthusiastic cheers”. The children and adults enjoyed tea at the Drill Hall.

During the evening “B” Company (Battle) 1st Cinque Ports Rifle Volunteers returned from Camp and were also entertained to tea at the Drill Hall. One of their number, Pte. W Boxall of Sedlescombe, had been on duty helping to line the route of the coronation procession in London. Cyclists for the illuminated cycle parade gathered opposite the Drill Hall at 7.30pm, where Captain Whistler, Mr L W Smith and Mr F Sheppard judged the Ladies and Messrs F Gorham Ticehurst, A Saunders and H Hoad judged the men.⁵ The procession was led by the Town Band in a decorated break, with the Fife and Drum Band at the rear in Mr W Beney’s van, which had been decorated by teachers in the Infants School, assisted by the boys. Mr Jenner also took part in the procession in his motor car. The illuminated parade went through the town and visited Telham Court, returning to the Abbey, which was illuminated by 700 fairy lamps of different colours. Deanery Lane “looked exceeding pretty with its long vista of fairy lamps and the illuminated letters “ER” standing out in bold relief at the farther end”. Many other homes and businesses were also lit up, with Langton House a centre of attention, with not only lights but also roof portraits of the new King and Queen, as well as Queen Victoria and some famous generals. Local views were shown by means of a Magic Lantern. The National Anthem was sung from the top of the Abbey Tower, and there was

⁵ The prizes for the Ladies were as follows: 1. Miss Annie Reed “Japan”; 2. Miss Edith Jempson “Shepherdess”; 3. Miss Minnie Clifton “Queen of Roses”. The men’s prizes were awarded as follows: 1. Mr T Cobb “Highwayman”; 2. Mr T Wait “King’s Canopy”; 3. Mr J Bailey “Floral”. Messrs J Luck and A Holland were commended.



dancing on the Green to the accompaniment of the Town Band. The day closed with a display of fireworks, including between eighty and ninety rockets.

Sunday saw a special Coronation Service with a choral celebration of Holy Communion. In the evening the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis were sung to settings by Villiers Stanford, with Zadoc the Priest as an anthem. At the end of the service the Coronation March and Pastorale by Wely were “brilliantly executed” by the organist. Following the service, as a token of thanks, the Dean

presented adult members of the Choir with copies of *King Edward's Realm*, and the children with illuminated cards. Similar cards had been presented to the children in the Sunday School. In the afternoon children had been led to Church by the Fife and Drum Band, (right) playing *Onward Christian Soldiers*. To remember the Coronation, children of the town were



presented with Coronation Medals from Mrs Ellice, 1 lb tins of sweets from Newberys, Coronation Mugs from the ladies of Battle, and pairs of “solitaires” by Mr Albion Thorpe. Events closed on Monday evening with a Dutch Auction at the Drill Hall, with votes of thanks to prominent members of the Committee for all their hard work in organising the celebrations.

An addendum to the celebrations was advertised in the *Observer* on 26th August as follows:

Drill Hall Battle, Wednesday and Thursday August 27th and 28th, at 8 o'clock, children's matinee Thursday at 3pm THE ENTIRE CORONATION PROCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII, in living pictures, by Glover's Royal Bioscope. Three miles of pictures and Mr G H Snazelle's Great Entertainment, assisted by Mr Algernon Newark and Miss Mary Glover".

No doubt this was much enjoyed!

In an interesting footnote the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 17 May 1902 reported that until the late eighteenth century the coronation robe of William the Conqueror, together with his sword, were kept at Cowdray Castle in Midhurst, being unfortunately destroyed in a fire of 1793. The robe, it asserts, was “a Royal pallium....beautifully ornamented with gold and very costly gems”. The sword and robe had apparently been presented to Battle Abbey by William the Conqueror, but had later been moved to Cowdray



by the Montague family, onetime owners of the Abbey, in 1717. This most interesting and intriguing story, however, is currently unverified.

George V's Coronation (22 June 1911)

Following the death of Edward VII in 1910, the coronation of George V and Queen Mary took place in Westminster Abbey⁶ on Thursday 22 June 1911. The ceremony was preceded by a procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey and the same in reverse following the ceremony. Fifty grandstands were erected along the route holding numbers varying between 250 and 3,500 people. George was the second son of Edward VII, his elder brother having died in 1892.

Reports of celebrations in Battle are less detailed than for the previous coronation, but the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 24 June 1911 gives some idea of how the town celebrated. Flags were seen in virtually every home, children carried "favours" – such as gilded miniatures of their majesties and tri-coloured sashes – carts, horses and bicycles were decorated. Strings of flags of every nation were strung at intervals across the High Street and images of their majesties were displayed. At the Deanery and some other residences fairy lamps and Chinese lanterns added to the festive scene. Residents were awoken by a "rough" band playing in the streets at 4.30am. Swimming competitions judged by Messrs Hoad, Anning and Davis and started by Cllr P J Butler were held at Powder Mills Pond⁷. A special service was held at the church, conducted by the Dean and the Rev R C Davis, PC Drury and W J Roberts (Congregational Pastor). Music included "Zadoc the Priest" and "Let My Prayer Come Unto Thee". A dinner was held afterwards for a reported nine hundred people at the Drill Hall. This seems a very large number for a seated meal and its accuracy must surely be questioned. Children's and adults' sporting competitions took place, including for the adults a "bun and treacle" competition, in which suspended buns, smeared with treacle were moved up and down in front of a line of people who attempted to bite them. "Tilting the Bucket" was a "side-splitting ordeal" in which a bucket of water was balanced on a platform with a hole in the board underneath. Competitors were wheeled up in a wheelbarrow and had to get a pole through the hole without touching it, if they did the contents of the bucket emptied on the competitor. A cycle parade was held, for which prizes were awarded⁸. Fireworks and a bumper bonfire on Caldbec Hill ended the celebrations. On Friday evening the inmates of the Workhouse were treated to a concert, given by the Battle Branch of the Girls' Friendly Society. It included a piano solo by Miss E Holt, Morris dances, a

⁶ The coronation can be viewed at [Coronation Of His Majesty King George V \(1911\) - YouTube](#)

⁷ Results as follows: 100 yds. handicap 1. I G Mobsby; 2. W Fleet; 3. T Clark. 50 yds. Novices 1. I W Saunders; 2. F Boxall; 3. C Longley. 45yds Back Race 1. H Young; 2. W Fleet; 3. H Bennett. Diving 1. G Mobsby. Novices C Longley.

⁸ Results as follows: Ladies: 1. Miss K Tutt "Britannia"; 2. Miss F Saunders "Coon Girl"; 3. Miss Cook; 4. Miss Crawley. Gentlemen: 1. Mr Cook "Chinaman"; 2. Mr Schnorr "Our Colonies"; 3. Mr Jenner "Ship"; 4. Mr Vicary "Ship".



song “In the Evening by the Moonlight” which was sung by Miss Thomas, a mandolin duet by Miss Pook and Miss Boxall and a play⁹, “Two Rooms to Let”, a farce which was very well received. Miss Ivy Duke gave an “excellent vocal selection” and Miss E Ransome a “good recitation”.

On 1 July 1911 the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* reported that the previous Monday gifts had been presented to the children at Battle and Langton School. Newberys, by way of their contribution to the coronation celebration funds, presented each child with a box of sweets etched with photographs of the King and Queen as well as a “Dreadnought”. Miss Smithe, of “Campfield” presented the children with King George pennies. The Dean and Hon Mrs Currie were present together with the three Misses Newbery. Mr Kemp gave a vote of thanks for the gifts. The same edition noted that a Coronation Masonic Service had been held at Battle Parish Church on the previous Sunday evening, attended by Freemasons from Hastings, St Leonards, Bexhill, Rye and Battle¹⁰ numbering eighty or ninety. They gathered at the Church Hall and then marched in their regalia and jewels of office through the grounds of the Deanery to the Church. Mr R B Allwork and Mr T W Avis acted as Directors of the ceremony. The processional Hymn was “Brothers of the Order” and the Very Rev E R Currie, a Past Grand Officer of the Order and the Rev R C Davis and Rev P C Drury officiated.

George VI’s Coronation (12 May 1937)

The coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth took place on Wednesday 12 May 1937 at Westminster Abbey,¹¹ on the date that had been intended for the coronation of Edward VIII, re-purposed following the abdication of December 1936. They were crowned King and Queen of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the British Commonwealth as well as Emperor and Empress of India. Guests began to arrive at 6am, with some peers carrying sandwiches in their coronets! Inside the Abbey “the overall impression was colour everywhere, with blue and gold hangings and carpets and crimson robes and uniforms.”¹² Queen Mary, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret watched from the Royal Gallery. The ceremony was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang and was similar to that used by George V. A few minor hitches occurred during the ceremony – the Archbishop mistakenly thought he had been handed King Edward’s crown the wrong way round, the King’s train was stepped on by a Bishop and a thumb was placed over the words of the oath when the King was attempting to read them.

⁹ Cast as follows: Priscilla – Miss Nellie Saxby; Mattie – Miss Madge Baily; Mrs Stokes – Miss Ivy Duke; Sophia (the maid) Miss L Savage.

¹⁰ Members of “Abbey Lodge” attending included: R B Allwork, T W Avis, Mr H Ewbank Smith, J W Hocking, Mr Alfred Blackman, C F Crew, R F Boutwood

¹¹The coronation can be viewed at [Coronation of King George VI: Westminster Abbey 1937 - YouTube](#)

¹² [George VI | Westminster Abbey \(westminster-abbey.org\)](#)



The coronation was the first outside broadcast for the BBC, and the BBC website reports it was declared “the supreme triumph of television to date”. Three cameras were deployed each side of Apsley Gate and Frederick Grisewood commentated. The return procession to Buckingham Palace was the longest to that date, being over six miles and was watched by large crowds of people. It celebrated the Empire, with representatives of all the Dominions and colonies attending, including, for the first time, African Royalty.

In Battle, the first event reported celebrating the coronation was an entertainment by the Scouts, called “Coronation Pie”. The *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 1 May 1937 reports that the performances at the Church Hall were “well received”, with both performances and matinee attracting large audiences. The entertainment included numbers from the “Gang Show”, a skit on Hyde Park Speakers “If It Comes to This”¹³, a game of “On the Panel”¹⁴, followed by a burlesque entitled “Our Coronation Fete”. Tony Packham recited a monologue entitled “The Five Barred Gate” and “Jack and the Beanstalk” was performed¹⁵. The programme concluded with songs “Round the Camp Fire”.

On 27 February and 24 April 1937 it was reported that Battle’s plans for the coronation celebrations were as follows: at 9.30 am there would be an errand boys cycle race, using trade cycles with carriers, the Coronation Service would be relayed in St Mary’s Church following which children accompanied by the Town Band would process from the Abbey Green to the Recreation Ground, where there would be sports for children and adults. Maypole dancing would take place, a tea would be provided for children and a lunch for old people at the Drill Hall with the celebrations culminating in a bonfire and firework display at 9.30pm. Mugs and flags would be given to all children of school age and under. The Chamber of Commerce would decorate the streets and prizes would be given for the best decorated shop and house. The *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of 15 May 1937 reveals that some of these plans had to be changed due to inclement weather. The errand boys’ cycle race took place, starting at Abbey Green, down Powdermill Lane, back to North Trade Road via Tellis Coppice and finishing at the starting point¹⁶. “Large numbers” listened to the coronation service at the church, which was facilitated by local electrician Mr Slade, members of the British Legion organised a lunch for old people at the Drill Hall and the Women’s Institute organised the children’s tea. The sports, however, had to be postponed to Whit Monday, but instead an impromptu entertainment¹⁷ took place in the Drill Hall. For an event presumably put together at the last minute it seems quite extensive! It featured community singing, a gymnastic display by the Battle Athletic Club¹⁸, a grand coronation pageant including Maypole Dances and flag drill. Scenes in the pageant represented

¹³ Performed by Frank Agate, Fred Blackman, Jack Hatton, Tony Packman.

¹⁴ Panellists Frank Agate, Fred Blackman, Jack Hatton, Tony Packman and Charles Thompsett

¹⁵ Cast – Jack Hatton (Evil), John Blackman (Jack), Gilbert Harris (Fairy Queen), Charles Thompsett (Jack’s mother), Stanley Robbins (Princess).

¹⁶ 1st J Boorman, 2nd T Pellett, 3rd P Abbott

¹⁷ Mr Errey compered and led the community singing.

¹⁸ Directed by Messrs Ballard and Keeble



Britannia, England and the Dominions all performed by children of Battle and Langton School¹⁹. Hand-bell ringers played a selection²⁰, the King's speech was relayed and coronation mugs were presented to children of school age and under.



Children of Battle and Langton School Celebrating the Coronation of George VI

Battle's postponed Coronation Sports²¹ took place on 17 May, with the highlight being the "ladies cheese contest." Much merriment was caused when the cheese was bowled into a tent, subsequently let down on top of all the competitors by a mischievous youth! Unfortunately the "youth" is not named! The boys' sack race "also caused great amusement". Six teams competed in the Tug of War²², which featured "some fine pulling". Prizes were presented by R W Fovargue, Chair of the Parish Council. A cup for the men's 880 yds. was presented to T Richardson by Mrs Slade, J Moore came second. Battle Band played throughout the afternoon and evening when a colourful firework display and bonfire took place. The King's Head and the Crown were rendered in fireworks, golden rains in

¹⁹ Children trained by Mr Clarke (Headmaster), Mrs Clarke, Miss Sutton and Mr Walker

²⁰ Directed by Mr Keen

²¹ **Results:** 80 yds. handicap Boys 1. C Smith, 2 E Payne, 3. Godfrey Lade. Girls – 1. Eileen Stern, 2. Mary Boorman, 3. Greta Winchester. Three-legged handicap Boys 1. K Crouch and A Sheather, 2. R Thomas and D Moore, 3. ? Marchant and S Blackman. Skipping handicap Girls 1. Greta Winchester, 2. Phyllis Reynolds. Boys 100yds handicap twelve and over 1. D Penfound, 2. S Blackman, 3. A Sheather. Girls 1. Joan Francis, 2. Iris Avann, 3. Joan Bailey. Boys sack race 1. F Soan, 2. P Sargent, 3. P Winchester and D Harris. Girls Threadneedle Race 1. Betty Taylor and Eileen Skilton 2. Iris Avann, 3. J Stern and N Carter. Girls 60 yds. under eight 1. J Ballard, 2. P Spray, 3. B Oliver. Novelty Eating the Bun Race 1. D Winchester 2. R Pellett 3. M Wrenn. Boys Cycle Race 1. J Marchant, 2. A Fuller, 3. D Thomas.

²² Won by Battle Police Station, captained by D C Field

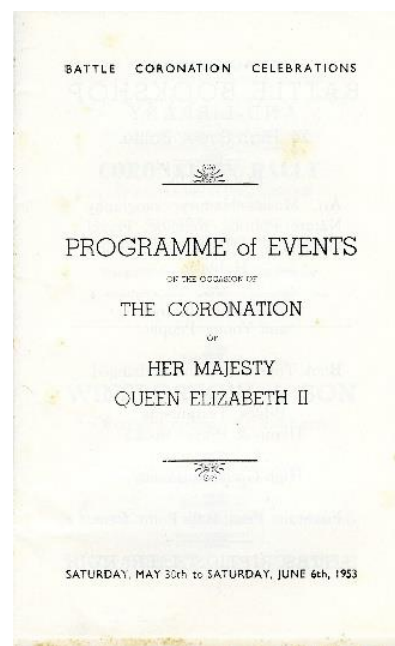


coronation colours were set off and there was a firework rendition of the Zambesi Falls. The bonfire, when lit, “was accompanied by the explosions of the well-known Battle Rousers”.

Elizabeth II’s Coronation (2 June 1953)

Following the untimely death of George VI in February 1952, Princess Elizabeth was crowned Queen Elizabeth II on Tuesday 2 June 1953. Once again the coronation took place in Westminster Abbey and was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher. The day before the coronation the Queen made a radio broadcast to the Commonwealth, in which she pledged “Throughout all my life and with all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust”.²³ The coronation was the first to be televised, being watched by millions around the world, with many purchasing or hiring television sets so that they could watch the event.²⁴ Prince Philip was the first peer to pay homage to the Queen. The Queen’s dress was designed by Norman Hartnell and she was crowned using St Edward’s Crown. On leaving the Abbey she wore the Imperial State Crown for a 7.2 kilometre procession route to Buckingham Palace. Crowds numbering about three million viewed the procession, despite heavy rain. The family appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace after the procession to watch a fly past.

In Battle a whole week of celebrations were planned by the Coronation Committee. These were preceded on 27th May by the Rye Division Girl Guides holding a Coronation Rally on the Rec, including stalls and a pageant.



²³ [The Queen's Accession and Coronation | The Royal Family](#)

²⁴ The coronation can be viewed at [The Queen's Coronation - YouTube](#)



On 30th May Children's Sports competitions were to take place on the Rec from 2pm to 5pm.

Coronation Day itself, (Tues 2 June) would see the Coronation Service shown in St Mary's Church, on television sets borrowed from a Hastings TV shop, enabling everyone to view the service for the first time. An American

Doubles Tennis Competition (where a single player would take on a team of two opponents) would take place on the courts at the Recreation Ground from 2.30pm, followed by a Fancy Dress Children's Tea at the Drill Hall at 5.30pm, including a presentation of Coronation Souvenirs to the children. At 7pm the Recreation Ground would host a display of Scout Craft by the 1st Battle Scouts followed by a Grand Torchlight Procession to light a bonfire on Caldbec Hill.

BATTLE CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

SATURDAY, 30th MAY
2.0 P.M.

CHILDREN'S SPORTS
AT THE RECREATION GROUND

Entry Forms available from— The Headmaster, Battle and Langton School

SPORTS PROGRAMME

Time	Event No.	Event
2.30	1.	Boys under 12½ yrs. High Jump
2.30	2.	Boys over 12½ yrs. 100 yards. 6 heats
2.30	3.	Girls over 12½ yrs. 100 yards. Heats
2.50	4.	Junior Boys & Girls 9-12½ yrs. 80 yds. 6 heats each
3.10	5.	Boys and Girls, mixed. 30 yards. 6 heats
3.30	6.	Boys over 12½ yrs. High Jump
3.30	7.	Girls over 12½ yrs. High Jump
3.50	8.	Boys, open. Long Jump
3.50	9.	Girls, open. Long Jump
4.0	10.	100 yards Final. Senior Boys
4.0	11.	100 " " Senior Girls
4.0	12.	50 " " Lower Juniors and Infants
4.0	13.	80 " " Junior Boys
4.0	14.	80 " " Junior Girls
4.20	15.	Boys, open. 440 yards
4.20	16.	Girls, open. 440 yards
4.30	17.	Boys, open teams of 4. 4 by 110 yds. Relay
4.30	18.	Girls, open teams of 4. 4 by 110 yds. Relay
4.40	19.	Girls, open. Egg and Spoon
4.40	20.	Boys, open. Egg and Spoon
4.40	21.	Boys, open. Three legged
4.40	22.	Girls, open. Three legged
4.50	23.	Boys, Slow Cycle, 50 yds.
4.50	24.	Girls, Slow Cycle, 50 yds.
4.50	25.	Boys, open. Throwing a Cricket Ball
4.50	26.	Girls, open. Throwing a Stoolball
5.0	27.	PRIZE-GIVING

RULES— A maximum of 3 events only is allowed for each competitor. Soft shoes must be worn.

BATTLE CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

CORONATION DAY
TUESDAY, 2nd JUNE, 1953

THE CORONATION SERVICE
OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
May be seen on TELEVISION SCREENS
In the PARISH CHURCH. (During the official times)

Children will be allowed only if accompanied by a parent. Proceeds of a collection will be given to the National Institute for the Blind.
T.V. sets supplied gratis by Mr. W. E. Allen, Queen's Road, Hastings.

AMERICAN
DOUBLES TENNIS DRIVE
(HANDICAP)
ON THE PUBLIC COURTS, RECREATION GROUND
COMMENCING AT 2.30 p.m.

Entrance Fee 2.5 per player, i.e. 5. per playing pair. PRIZES
Entry Forms may be obtained from—
TICKNERS NEWSAGENCY, HIGH STREET, BATTLE
Entry Forms together with Entry Fee to be returned to the Youth Centre

CHILDREN'S TEA
AT THE DRILL HALL, 5.30 p.m.

The Coronation Tea is for children of Battle over 5 years of age, still at school residing in the Parish of Battle.

FOLLOWED BY
PRESENTATION OF CORONATION SOUVENIRS
TO CHILDREN ATTENDING TEA

Children under 5 years of age, and those of five years and under 16 years, who are unable to attend the tea, may receive their Souvenirs at the Drill Hall, Wednesday afternoon, June 3rd, 3.45. Mothers of the 'under fives' must produce green ration book in cases where children are unable to attend personally.

More fun followed the next day when at 3pm a public pancake race from the George to the

BATTLE CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

WEDNESDAY, 3rd JUNE

ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVAL
YOUTH CENTRE, UPPER LAKE

B.Y.C. PLAYERS
present
MASTER DUDLEY
A MODERN TRAGEDY BY PHILLIP JOHNSON
PRODUCED BY REX COLLINS

BATTLE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
present
NOVELETTE
A COMEDY BY PHILLIP JOHNSON
PRODUCED BY VERA BROWN

B.Y.C. PLAYERS
present
MICHAEL
A RELIGIOUS FOLK TALE OF OLD RUSSIA BY MILES HALLESON
(Adapted from story by Tolstoy)
PRODUCED BY REX COLLINS

CURTAIN RISES AT 8 p.m.

For details of casts etc. consult Play Programme.
ADMISSION BY PROGRAMME, PRICE 3/-
Available from Battle Women's Institute and The Youth Centre.

BATTLE CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

ON MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY
JUNE 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 1953
FROM 2.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. DAILY

A HANDICRAFT EXHIBITION
WILL BE HELD IN
THE CHURCH HALL

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES
EXHIBITS MAY BE SHOWN IN THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS

Class 1. Boys and Girls under 11 years.
1. Christmas Cards and Calendars.
2. Needlework and Knitting.
3. Handicrafts.

Class 2. Boys and Girls under 15 years.
1. Christmas Cards and Calendars.
2. Needlework and Knitting.
3. Handicrafts.

Class 3. Youths and Girls under 21 years.
1. Christmas Cards and Calendars.
2. Knitted Garments.
3. Embroidered Articles.
4. Handicrafts (including Woodwork and Metalwork)

Class 4. Men and Women.
1. Art. 2. Lampshades. 3. Knitted Work.
4. Embroidery. 5. Tea Cosies. 6. Soft Toys.
7. Thrift Rugs. 8. Woodwork. 9. Something new out of something old.

Class 5. Special Class of Photographic Exhibits.

Entry fee 3d. Children under 15 free. No limit to number of entries
Exhibits must be delivered at The Church Hall between 9.0 and 10.30 a.m. on Monday, 1st June, 1953.
Prizes and Certificates will be awarded for all Classes.
The Committee reserves the right to refuse late entries.
Admission to Exhibition, 6d. Children, 3d.

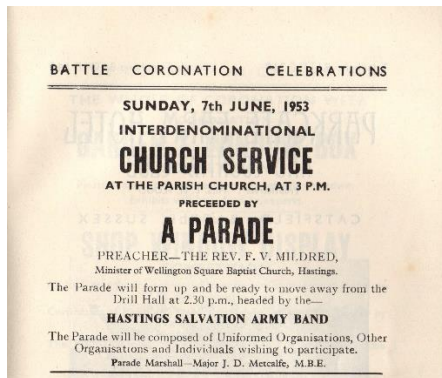
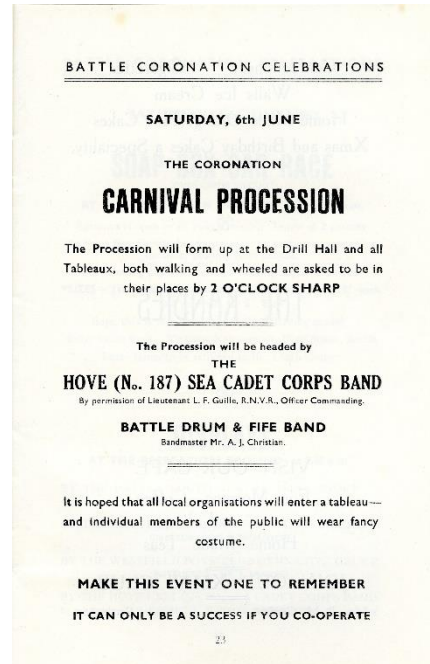
Entry Forms may be obtained from "Tickners Newsagency," High Street.

Bull Ring, followed by a trades-mans' race at 3.30pm were scheduled. A Mammoth Whist Drive was advertised in the Guides Hut at 7.15pm and a One Act Play Festival would be held at the Youth Centre in Upper Lake, with three plays starting from 8pm. On 1st to 3rd June a Handicraft Exhibition would take place at the Church Hall between 2.30 and 7.30pm.



4th June was to see a Cricket Match between Battle Rangers FC and Battle Cricket Club and on 5th June a Grand Coronation Ball was planned at the Drill Hall from 8pm to 1am. At 7.15pm the Sedlescombe and District Cycle Speedway League would hold an Individual Riders Championship for a Coronation Trophy.

The seemingly relentless round of festivities was to continue on 6th June with a Coronation Carnival Procession at 2pm starting at the Drill Hall. At 3pm a Soap Box Car Race was scheduled at the Recreation Ground, plus displays at 3.30 by Battle Youth Centre Judo Group, Battle and Langton School Mixed Choir, Westfield Boys Club Gymnastics Group, Hove Unit Sea Cadet Corps Band. At 4.40pm at the Drill Hall there would be an Old People’s Tea. Throughout Coronation Week there was a Coronation Garden and Window Box Competition, and a Coronation Shop Window Display Competition. The Floral Display Sub-Committee provided Floral Displays on the Green.



Even on Sun 7th June all was not finished. There would be an interdenominational Church Service at St Mary’s at 3pm, preceded by a Parade of uniformed and other organisations from the Drill Hall at 2.30pm, led by the Hastings Salvation Army Band.

But did all these events take place as planned? Unlike previous coronations, the local newspaper did not report the coronation events which took place in Battle in coronation week, no doubt all space was taken by the numerous reports of festivities taking place in Hastings and St Leonards. We do know, however, thanks to local residents Jenny Mitchell and Jo Thompson that the children’s tea took place and that all who attended were given coronation mugs as souvenirs. Jo Thompson also remembered watching the Coronation on the television at The Wellington public house and there having been a street party in Wellington Gardens. Private parties also took place, for example in Marley Rise. On June 30th five hundred children “dressed in their brightest summer clothes” walked in a crocodile from Marley Lane School to the Abbey Theatre in Lower Lake to watch the technicolour film “A Queen is Crowned”, an event recalled by Jenny Mitchell. According to the *Hastings and St*



Leonards Observer of 4th July 1953 this was followed by a tea for the children at the Drill Hall organised by Mrs Heasman and volunteers from Senlac Gardens. The Dean led Grace and the children were entertained after tea by a conjurer, George Mockford, and community singing led by Roger Thomas of Hastings. Each child took home a balloon courtesy of Loarings of Battle. The newspaper further reported that the film was shown a second time of July 1st attended by patients of Battle Hospital and the Derby and Joan Clubs of Northiam and Sedlescombe. This brought an end to what must have been an exhausting week of merry-making, no doubt a welcome contrast to the austere war years and the start of a new “Elizabethan age” promising hope and possibility for the years to come.



Children in Fancy Dress attending Tea Party at Drill Hall

Photo courtesy of Jenny Mitchell

Georgina Doherty 26 3 2023

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