



Holt Horticultural and Cottagers' Friend Society

For the better encouragement of the cultivation of vegetables, etc, amongst the cottagers of this place. It is proposed to have an Exhibition of vegetables and fruit to take place on Wednesday August 13th 1862, in a splendid marquee, which will be erected in a convenient field, kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. Hunt. Candidates for prizes must be cottagers living at Holt, and who do not earn their livelihood by gardening. Candidates must give notice to the secretary not later than the Saturday before the Show. Cottagers exhibiting samples not grown in their own gardens will be disqualified from taking any prize. Subscribers and Exhibitors admitted free; Non-subscribers and Visitors will be admitted at 3 o'clock at 6d each and at 5 o'clock at 3d each.

The Bradford celebrated Brass Band will be in attendance.
Henry C. Law, Hon. Sec.

Trowbridge Advertiser, 9 August 1862

First Exhibition of the Cottagers' Friend Society

The rain slowly drizzled down; the sun hid his face behind the masses of drifting clouds; the birds ceased to sing; flags and banners flapped heavily against their poles; the field wore a dreary aspect; the tents were deserted, save by the officials and the committee; and inhabitants looked moodily through their windows, in pity and commiseration for the promoters of the movement. It is the most thankless undertaking to have anything to do with the organisation of a new thing that has for its object the public good. There are plenty of people who will come into your assistance when they see chances of success and prosperity; but till then they stand aloof, and leave you to battle with difficulties and obstacles till they

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have been overcome; and when the thing is in a fair way for prosperity, then the volunteers pour in, and congratulate one another on what "we" have done. We don't say these remarks apply to the origin of the First Exhibition of the Holt Cottagers' Friend Society, but we do say on Wednesday last, there were a great many circumstances connected with the inauguration of the exhibition calculated to damp the ardour of the most sanguine. But the Holt people are not easily daunted by trifles. A few "good men and true" had conceived the idea that to establish a society of this description, would be to kindle honourable emulation amongst the cottagers in the neighbourhood in the cultivation of their gardens, strengthen social ties, and give them the opportunity, once a year at least, of enjoying a fete of their own. With this object in view this little band set to work, and soon proved the metal of the Holt people. In a very short time they found that everything promised fair, that the people of Holt were with them, and that the prospect of a show was very favourable. Thus it was that by the courteous invitation of the committee of management, we found ourselves in the field kindly placed at the disposal of the committee by Mr. Hunt, on the day of the exhibition, Wednesday last. Notwithstanding the discouraging influence above mentioned, which characterised the opening, the committee and the inhabitants hoped against hope. With scarcely one exception, every house and cottage in the village displayed decorations of some sort or other, in honour of the event. At the residences of the well-to-do, triumphal arches were extemporised of evergreens and flags, interspersed with mottoes, while the humble cots of the labouring classes displayed festoons of laurels and flowers, not altogether devoid of taste. Everyone showed that they had an interest in the day's proceedings. Mr. Law, of the New Inn, displayed a profusion of banners with inscriptions, which were stretched across the road. The neighbouring villages of Staverton and Broughton Gifford have willingly consented to join the society, but through unavoidable circumstances were too late this year to compete for prizes; still they sent some specimen for the exhibition.

The Tent

Appropriated to the show of fruit, flowers and vegetables, was erected by Mr. E. Taylor, Bradford-on-Avon, and its contents were a credit to the village. At the top were some very choice bouquets, in the department for children's prizes, and we were highly gratified at the taste which dictated the design in the collection of wild flowers. Louisa Drewett well deserved the first prize, both for selection and arrangement. The design was a crown, and these unpretending specimens of the flowers of the forest were so delicately and judiciously intertwined, as to give a most striking effect to the whole. In the vegetable department those collections which prizes were awarded (see prize list) were without exception some of the finest specimens that could be exhibited, and show that the science of horticulture is practically studied amongst the cottagers of Holt. There was also a very superior collection of apples, pears, grapes, and currants exhibited, not for competition, and would have secured a prize at any show, and a splendid bough of apples was exhibited, (not for competition) by Robert Gerrish. The flowers in pot too were very fine, considering they were raised, not in greenhouses, but in the labourer's cottage. There were vacant portions of the tent which we could have wished were occupied by plants from the greenhouses of the gentry. Such a graceful mark of their approbation of the object of the society, might no doubt be exemplified next year – at least we hope so.

List of Prizes

(Judges – Mr. Hudd, of Hilperton; Mr. Pratt, Woolley; Mr. Cantello, Broughton Gifford)

Best half peck of kidney potatoes, 1st prize, 4s, W. Orchard; 2nd prize, 2s 6d, George Denley; half peck of round ditto, 1st, 4s, Robert Gerrish; 2nd, 2s 6d, William Chapman. Best collection of cabbages, 1st prize, to George Gerrish; 2nd prize to Thomas Bailey. Twelve parsnips, 1st, 3s, William Merrert; 2nd, 1s 6d, Edward Pile; Walter Woodman exhibited a first rate sample. Twelve carrots, 1st, 3s, Philip Harford, 2nd, 1s 6d, Edward Pile. Twelve onions, 1st, 3s, John Collett; 2nd, 1s 6d, Thomas Bailey. Twelve pods of broad beans, 1st, 3s, George Gerrish; 2nd, 1s 6d, no competition. Twelve pods long pod beans, 1st 3s, John Hutton. Quarter peck of kidney beans, 1st, 2s 6d, Robert Gerrish, 2nd, 1s 6d, William Merrert. Twelve turnips, 1st, 2s, John Collett, 2nd, 1s 6d, no award. Quart of peas, 1st, 2s 6d, John Collett; 2nd, 1s 6d, John Hutt. Nine apples, 1st, 2s 6d, William Brown; 2nd, 1s 6d, Edward Skrine. Nine pears, 1st, 2s

6d, William Chapman; 2nd, 1s 6d, John Ricketts. An extra premium was given for a very large cucumber, shown by William Chapman. Best three plants of flowers, 3 distinct varieties growing in pots, calceolarias, fuchsias, and lilac geranium, 1st, 2s 6d, George Gay; 2nd, 1s 6d, no competition. Three distinct varieties of pot herbs, 1st, 2s, William Chapman; 2nd, no competition. Prize for children, best nosegay of wild flowers, 1st, 2s, Louisa Drewett; 2nd, 1s, Fanny Pretty.

At three o' clock the elements relaxed and as the clouds cleared away, so did the anxieties of the promoters of the movements and the gloomy forebodings of those who had promised themselves a day's enjoyment in celebration of the event. The excellent Bradford Amateur band arrived on the scene, and took up their position on the platform, and by and by the company poured in. All the elite of the neighbourhood soon filled the tent. Later in the afternoon "the million" swelled the throng, and in the evening the promoters of the show had good reason to banish all the fears that had haunted them during the prevalence of the drizzling rain, and believe that their labours were entirely successful, and well they deserved it. There was a large number of people from Bradford present.

The show having been duly examined and criticised, the enjoyment of the evening commenced. The band certainly played exceedingly well and the company seemed to thoroughly enjoy the truly beautiful rendering of Hadyn's "The Heavens are telling" and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus"

The following is the programme of music performed by the band:-

March, the Military Promenade	Le Moutier
Pas Le Double, the Lake of the nymphs	L' Mazieur
Selections, Martha	Flotow
Solos, Nopolean horn, cornet and euphoniom	
Galop, Submarine	D'Albert
Quadrille, Ramsgate Sands	D'Albert
Waltz, Kathleen Mavouraeen	D'Albert
Selection on American Airs	Couturier
Selection, Somnambula etc	Bellini
Waltz, Das Musikfest	Jackson
Quadrille, Palermo	D'Albert
March, Le Baunier of Orugny	J. Blanc
Galop, Sensation	D'Albert
Selection from "The Creation"	
The Heavens are telling	Hadyn
Hallelujah Chorus	Handel

(These two pieces were performed by particular desire)

A refreshment tent at one end of the field supplied the visitors with creature comforts. Dancing, kissing in the ring, jumping in sacks, foot races and other amusements furnished the lads and lasses with plenty of fun for the evening. But the rain placed a limit to the proceeding, and at nightfall succeeded in driving everybody homewards; but not before all were fully satisfied at the success that had attended the first exhibition of the Holt Cottagers' Friend Society. We wish it prosperity and continued success.

Trowbridge Advertiser, 16 August 1862

The first exhibition of the Holt Horticultural and Cottagers' Friend Society has proved a decided success, although the unfavourable state of the weather prevented hundreds more from attending, still there was a large concourse of persons present, including, with one or two exceptions, the whole of the gentry of the neighbourhood. T. B. Foster Esq., the Lord of the Manor, and his Lady, were unavoidably absent with their family in North Wales, but who nevertheless subscribed handsomely toward the movement, and we

are happy to add that the entrance money alone taken at the gates was more than sufficient to cover the whole of the expenses, consequently a good balance in hand, which will be deposited in the Post Office Bank, at interest, will be available for the next year, when we have no doubt through the indefatigable exertions of the honorary secretary Mr. H. C. Law, supported by a good working committee, to see them come out with increased prizes, a more numerous list of patrons and a much larger show.

Trowbridge Advertiser, 23 August 1862

Horticultural and Cottagers' Friend Society

The committee of the above society have decided upon holding their second annual exhibition on Wednesday the 12th August next. From the extra number of prizes to be competed for a good show is anticipated.

Trowbridge Advertiser, 18th July 1863

Holt Horticultural and Cottagers' Friend Society

The second exhibition of vegetables and fruit will take place on Wednesday, August 12th, 1863, in splendid marquee which will be erected in a convenient field, kindly lent by Mr. Hunt, for the occasion, when upwards of 70 PRIZES will be given.

The Bradford Celebrated Amateur Brass Band will be in attendance.

Exhibitors for prizes must be residents of Holt, and must give notice to the Secretary of their intention of competing not later than the Saturday before the Show.

Candidates exhibiting samples not grown in their own gardens (except for Jobbing Gardeners' Class) will be disqualified from taking any prize.

Subscribers and exhibitors will be admitted free. The Public will be admitted at Two o'clock. 1s, each; at Three o'clock, 6d; and at Five o'clock, 3d.

Tea and other refreshments will be provided on the Grounds.

Schedule of Prizes, etc, may be obtained on application to the Secretary.

H. C. Law, Hon. Sec

Trowbridge Advertiser. 1 August 1863

Horticultural Society

At a meeting of the committee recently held, it was found that, after all expenses connected with the late show had been paid, there remained a handsome balance in hand towards next year's exhibition.

Trowbridge Advertiser, 29 August 1863