



Coronation Day, 1911



The Coronation of George V and his wife, Mary, took place on the 22nd June 1911 and the town of Ventnor, like so many others up and down the kingdom, laid on a wide-ranging series of events over the course of that day. This picture, almost certainly one of many commissioned on the occasion, might perhaps be cast as the 'hat parade', for the women seem to have been determined to try and outdo each other in the size and decoration of their headwear.

The location of this small crowd is Church Street, just outside St. Catherine's Church. The High Street is down towards the left and the striped awnings belong to Knight's Library's West End branch on the corner of the entrance to Hambrough Road. This group may have been on their way to the special church service that was held at St. Catherine's at 10.30 a.m.

Over the rest of the day, there was a long sequence of further events. At 12.30 p.m., persons over 60 years of age were entertained to dinner at the Town Hall. At 1.00 p.m., a royal salute was fired from the Western Cliffs by the 4th Hants (Howitzer) Battery R.F.A., and Princess Beatrice's I.W. Rifles (8th Battallion Hants Regiment). At 3.00 p.m., there was a tea in the Town Hall for all children from 3 to 16 years of age, the participants required to register and assemble at the various Sunday Schools before processing to the venue on Albert Street. There was a separate procession of groups of school children starting out at the Town Hall at 3 p.m. with Ventnor Park as its destination and tea was taken at various points along the route. After tea, there were sports and other displays in Ventnor Park.

For adults and the public generally, there were athletics and other races on the Western Cliffs between 2.30 and 5.00 p.m., including sprints, a marathon, long jump, potato race, sack race, tug-of-war and a host of others. Later in the day, the Eastern Cliffs became the setting for illuminations and fireworks, Meanwhile, bands played on the Pier and there were prizes offered for the best illuminated hotels and boarding houses on the Esplanade, as viewed from the Pier.

There must have been some very exhausted adults as well as children when the day drew to a close. And this must have extended to all those who were helping to service the various dinners and teas.

Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, especially those of the late Fay Brown.



Ventnor & District Local History Society is a registered charity, working to preserve and record the history of our area and make it available to the public in the Ventnor Heritage Centre.
The Society and Heritage Centre are run and managed by volunteers.

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