

The Tylden-Pattensons Taking Tea at Dashmondon



The Tylden-Pattensons were the village 'squires' for about 140 years. They lived at Dashmondon from the 1850s to the 1940s; here, taking tea in the garden, are Major William Hodges Tylden-Pattenson and his wife, Matilda, daughter of the rector. Their son Edwin, on the left, born in 1871, was the last to live there and died childless in 1940. The family contributed much time and money to the village, giving land for the hall, and fencing and tidying the green. Alice, their daughter, hated the 1880s enlargement of the house. The basket at her feet kept the teapot warm.

High Street, c.1883



This photograph, taken from the church gate looking east, shows that the High Street is remarkably little changed. Note the children sitting in the street, blissfully unconcerned before the motor age. On the left the Bethersden marble pavement is visible. The Chequers Inn was rebuilt but closed in the 1990s and is now a Chinese take-away.

A newspaper cutting reported the following discovery during demolition of the old Chequers Inn in 1892: "a box between the beams near a staircase containing the remains of an infant - top of the skull, arm and jawbone clearly discernible, the rest crumbled to dust. Close by... a pot of paste labelled Poison."



Henry (Harry) Witherden

'Old Harry' was a well-known character locally. Here, he stands outside his house, Nimrod Hall, in one of the smocks he always wore. His family owned several local farms, including Great Bachelor, in the 19th century. Harry was also known for his great reluctance to move with the times. It was some while before he would allow mains water to be connected, preferring to draw water from his own pond; and when public transport was introduced he still insisted on walking into Tenterden rather than use the bus.

It was said that Harry, as a young man, had a somewhat favoured life. He always went to school with a half-sovereign in his pocket and when he rode out on his horse his sister was told to "open the gate for Harry".

Farming was not an easy life in his day, and his wife said she was "hogging (i.e. killing a pig) on her wedding day and had been hogging ever since".

Biddenden Local History Society received many items of interest when Nimrod Hall was cleared on the death of Stanley Rogers, husband of Harry's daughter Lydia.