

HARRIETSHAM TIMES

News from March 1917

Presentation to Mr. J. J. Hedges Stationmaster

There was a large attendance at the Roebuck Public House on the 21st to witness the presentation to Mr. J. J. Hedges, stationmaster (who is leaving Harrietsham to take up a similar duties at Malling), of a silver teapot and a purse of £10 from his friends and well-wishers at Harrietsham. Amongst those present were Colonel Tinnock (late Australian Army), Mr. Ivens, Mr. Hope, and Mr. L. J. Clark (Lenham). Mr. Thomas Clark J.P. took the chair to make the presentation.

In making the presentation, Mr. Clark gave a brief but interesting history of the genesis of the Maidstone to Ashford branch of the Chatham and Dover Railway, of the opposition encountered and of his own journeys to London in support. In reviewing the list of stationmasters he remembered of the many capable and obliging men, Mr Hedges was not the least, as was evidenced by the response to the testimonial and by the attendance that evening. The Chairman having proposed the toast of the Imperial Forces, it was responded to by Colonel Tinnock who took occasion to thank the Testimonial Committee and especially Mr. Whitehead, the Secretary, for the able manner in which they had carried out the collecting etc. so enabling them to show their appreciation of Mr. Hedges. A vote of thanks to Mr. Clark was also heartily accorded.

Service for John Brice Matthews

A numerously attended service in memory of the late Captain John Brice Matthews, 7th Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Matthews, who recently fell in action at the Front, was held in the Parish Church on Sunday 18th March. The service was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. H. de V. Watson, who feelingly alluded to the blameless life and youth of the late Captain Matthews, who was only 17 when he offered his services to his country in 1914, and attained his captaincy in September 1916.

Accompanying the family mourners were Mr. and Mrs. W. Brice (uncle and aunt), the Misses Brice and Mr. N. L. Brice (cousins), Mr F. S. Matthews (uncle), and Lieut. Freeman (Royal West Kent Regiment). The 11th platoon, C Company 5th Kent Volunteers, led by Captain G. Mercer, Company Commander, and Lieut. J. T. Hatch were also present at the sympathetically impressive service. The deepest sympathy is felt for Mr. J. H. Matthews and his family in their great bereavement.

Smoking Concert

A Smoking Concert was held in the village to which all members of the 50th Squadron Royal Flying Corps which is currently stationed at Stede Court were invited. It was a very enjoyable evening and our visitors produced some excellent talent.