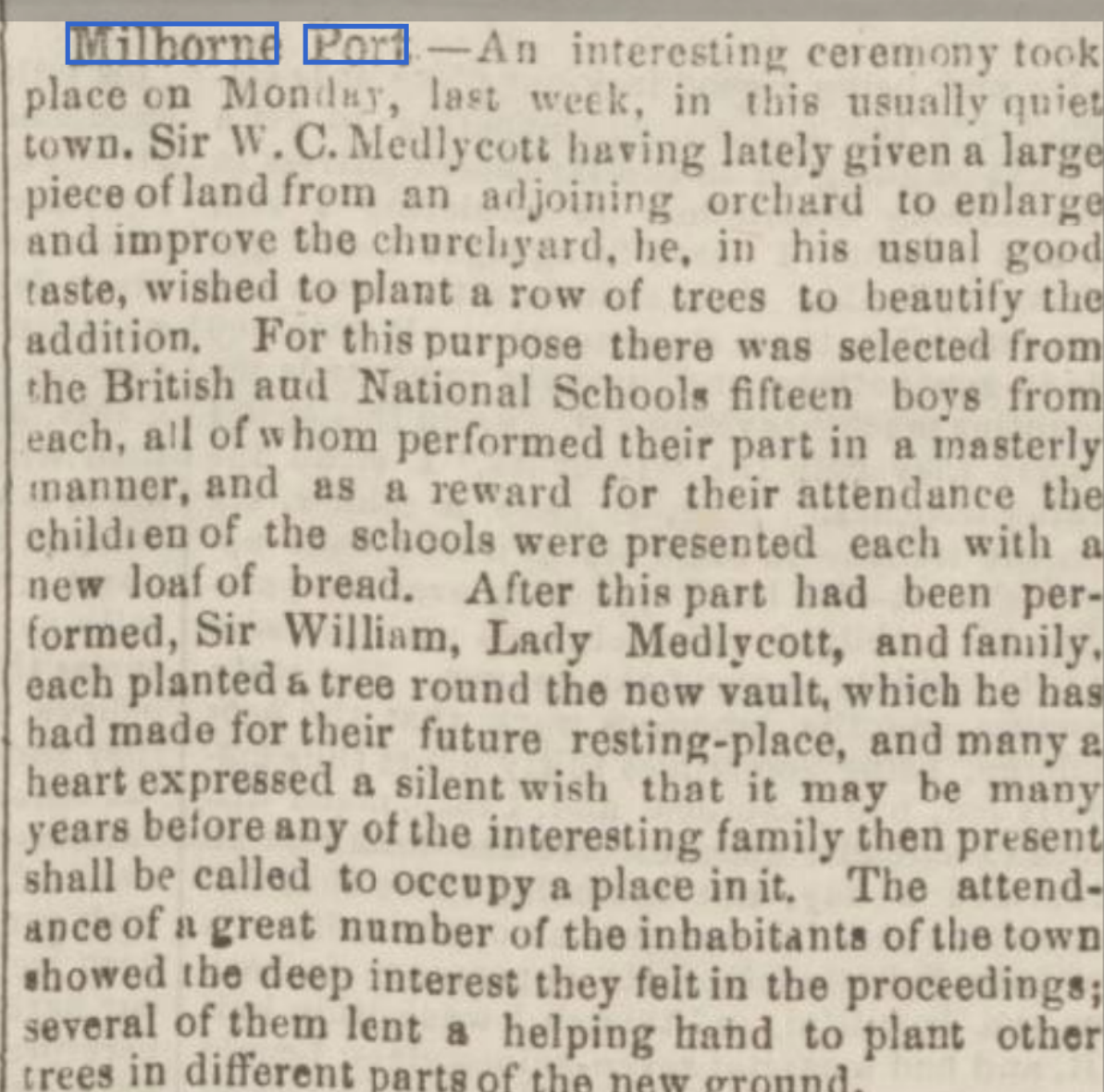


'Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky.' - Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931)

Amongst the many documents given to the museum a while ago was an envelope containing some very well-written poems written by children, celebrating the planting of trees in the churchyard of St. John's Church on 15th January 1855, 170 years ago today. Further investigation links the letters to this newspaper article from the Sherborne Mercury, 23rd January 1855. Sir William Coles Medlycott had given a piece of land for the enlargement of the churchyard and paid for a row of new trees, which were planted by boys from the British School (Chapel Lane) and the Church School (Crackmore). This is also when the trees that surround the Medlycott vault to the east of the churchyard that we can still see today.

The poems are a charming record of the experiences of Frederick Ansty, Thomas Luffman, John Mintern and Philip Shephard on that day.



Milborne Port.—An interesting ceremony took place on Monday, last week, in this usually quiet town. Sir W. C. Medlycott having lately given a large piece of land from an adjoining orchard to enlarge and improve the churchyard, he, in his usual good taste, wished to plant a row of trees to beautify the addition. For this purpose there was selected from the British and National Schools fifteen boys from each, all of whom performed their part in a masterly manner, and as a reward for their attendance the children of the schools were presented each with a new loaf of bread. After this part had been performed, Sir William, Lady Medlycott, and family, each planted a tree round the new vault, which he has had made for their future resting-place, and many a heart expressed a silent wish that it may be many years before any of the interesting family then present shall be called to occupy a place in it. The attendance of a great number of the inhabitants of the town showed the deep interest they felt in the proceedings; several of them lent a helping hand to plant other trees in different parts of the new ground.

A walk was made in Milborne Port
 The church yard to adorn
 Some trees were planted fresh and green
 On a fine Winters Morn.

II

Some trees were planted by some Boys
 Selected from the school
 To crown the whole some loaves were given
 Which pleased them to the full

III

The bells burst out in merry play
 On that fine winters morn
 The children gathered forth in groups
 To receive their loaves of corn.

IV

Each boy planted one tree
 The boys are call'd one by one

For to hold the tree that he must plant
That tree he calls his own.

John Winter Ch. of Eng.

On planting the Grove,
at Millborne Port, Jun 15th 1835

1
Assembled on this hallowed spot,
Where kindred dead repose;
All earthly scenes and cares forgot,
And vanished all their woes.

2
The pleasing task this day assigned,
Our faithful hands to do,
Shall from this period be engrained,
In memory's record tree.

3
As rise these trees, and grateful know,
Their shade upon the ground;
May we in space, and knowledge grow,
With every virtue crown'd.

4
We come to lend our willing aid,
To one whose liberal mind;
Entitled him to be repaid,
With love, from all mankind,

5
Well pleased to meet not him alone,
But those, who dear to him;
For numerous acts of kindness shown,
Deserve sincere esteem.

6
And while they plant around the place,
Design'd their forest home;
Heaven grant them all a lengthen'd space,
Before they tither come.

(over)

7

While here may they and we enjoy,
The kind Redeemer's love,
And thence our grateful tongues employ,
To praise his name above—

Fredk Jasty.
British School, Melbourne Port.

The bells lurst forth in merry peals ^{1st} / On
Upon that monday morn
The children gathered forth in groups
Each face with smiles adorn'd
With eager ^{2nd} steps they wend their way
Towards that old ^{Ch} churchyard
Each face repeats they know for what
And from their voice is heard
Their benefactor meets them there ^{3rd}
And welcomes them with joy
Then one by one each boy he calls
That fair young tree to plant
The summons ^{4th} quickly is obeyed
The tree fixed in the ground
Then earth is thrown upon its roots
And firmly trodden down
A noble sight will it present ^{5th}
Those thirty trees full grown
And from each branch will many a bird
Send forth its sweetest song

As years roll by, the boy will change
To manhood he'll attain
Yet still the memory of that day
To him will be the same
Some may be buried neath the sod
Others the world may roam
Yet ^heter change we all may see
That dearest place is home.

Philip Shephard

✓

"The Grove,"

1
 In eighteen hundred and fifty five,
 The Church-yard trees were planted wide,
 The Day was very bright and clear,
 And every one looked pleasant there,

2
 The Bells they ring a merry chime,
 At our beloved Barons's time,
 The bread was freely given there,
 Of which the Boys each had a share,

3
 And as the trees do upward rise,
 May we be growing good and wise,
 And walking in the heavenly road,
 That leads to glory and to God.

The Suffragan,

British School, Jan 15/55