

Source 1a

Summary of a report 'Visit to the Great Exhibition by children of Worthing and Broadwater National Schools on Tuesday, July 8, 1851'.

Local people raised enough money to send around ninety of the brightest children from schools in the area to the Great Exhibition in London. At 6 o'clock on the morning of Tuesday July 8 1851, they met at Railway Approach outside Worthing Station, with The Rev. T. Bayley, Curate of Broadwater and other adult helpers. The children were given some money to spend on their outing and Mr William Hardham of Warwick Street arranged for a packed lunch to be sent with them. Hundreds of people, including the promoters of the visit, went to the station to watch the children leave and to cheer them off.

Shortly after 6 o'clock, they all entered Second Class Carriages of the Brighton and South Coast Line, and the train then left for London Bridge Station.

On arriving at London Bridge at around 8.00am, the group boarded a steamer and sailed up the River Thames to Westminster. From the deck they could see large brick warehouses and other riverside buildings, as well as famous London landmarks. It was all very different from their country lifestyle in rural Sussex. They went past The Monument, St Paul's, The Chinese Junk, Somerset House and the New Houses of Parliament.

Back on land and each wearing a printed label saying 'Worthing and Broadwater National Schools', the children then walked to St James' Park. They passed Westminster Abbey and saw the Military on morning parade before going into the park. Important buildings like Buckingham Palace, Marble Arch, Apsley House, and St George's Hospital would have made a big impression on the children. They had never seen such grand architecture before.

The group now reached the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, the site of the Great Exhibition. Inside the palace of glass, the children were delighted and awe-struck at what they saw. Such a building had never been built or designed before. The palace covered a space almost twice the size of Broadwater Green and like in a giant greenhouse, housed full-grown trees. To the children, the counters and stalls displaying wonderful objects from all over the world -

## Leisure 8 - The Great Exhibition

Egypt, India, Africa, Canada, Spain, France, Italy, Australia and New Zealand - seemed to go on for miles and miles.

There were 65,000 visitors to the palace that day, and the Sussex children behaved so well that visitors complimented them. These children were the first from the national schools outside of London to visit the Great Exhibition.

They saw many lavish and beautiful things – items made in silks and satins, objects carved in wood, marble sculptures, magnificent pieces made in silver and gold, new agricultural tools and machinery that changed raw cotton to calico. Some of the main attractions included the Crystal Fountain, the Koh-i-noor diamond, and the machinery of Manchester.

The day was a great success. At 5 o'clock in the evening pre-ordered carriages came to take the party back to London Bridge Station. After a short rest and some refreshment, everyone boarded the Express Train to Worthing. When they arrived around 9.30pm, there were just as many people as saw them off in the morning, waiting to greet them with long, loud cheers. The children were counted at the platform - all had arrived safe and well.

After their first experience of such a long and exciting journey, the children were naturally exhausted. They had never seen so grand an exhibition or such wonderful sights, and they were very grateful to the organisers for their hard work in making the day a great success.

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