

Street Party 1814

It is not known when Deddington's first street party was held, but a strong contender to be the largest, was the public dinner for the inhabitants of Deddington, Clifton and Hempton on 26 July 1814 to celebrate peace with France ending 22 years of almost continuous warfare, following Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Leipzig and consequent abdication.

According to a report in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, "about 1600 sat down, in the Market-street, at 38 tables, furnished with a profusion of hot plum puddings, roast and boiled beef, with vegetables, and an abundance of strong ale. After dinner many loyal and appropriate toasts were given, with excellent songs and music. The tables, Town-Hall, and houses round the tables, were decorated with flags, oak, laurel and olive branches, and flowers".

In the evening various illuminations appeared, and there was dancing in the street. Despite the huge attendance, the dinner was over-catered, and the following evening over 1200 inhabitants "partook at the same tables of a cold repast. The utmost decorum and regularity was observed; joy sat on every countenance, and the mind of every one appeared animated by the same wish, that of making each other happy".

No-one sitting on one of the long forms in the Market Place that day could have anticipated that within seven months Napoleon would have escaped from captivity on Elba, triggering the '100 Days', and culminating in his final defeat by the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo.

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Oxford News.

A very liberal subscription having been entered into to defray the expences of a public dinner to the inhabitants of the parish of Deddington, on Tuesday last, about 1600 sat down, in the Market-street, at 38 tables, furnished with a profusion of hot plum puddings, roast and boiled beef, with vegetables, and an abundance of strong ale. After dinner many loyal and appropriate toasts were given, with excellent songs and music. The tables, Town-Hall, and houses round the tables, were decorated with flags, oak, laurel and olive branches, and flowers, and in the evening several appropriate transparencies, crowns, stars, devices in variegated lamps, and other illuminations were exhibited; and the merry dance, in which the principal inhabitants joined, continued in several parts of the street till a late hour. After supplying every person who, from illness or absence, was prevented attending the dinner, there remained sufficient for an entertainment on the following day, and, in the evening of Wednesday, upwards of 1200 of the inhabitants partook at the same tables of a cold repast. The utmost decorum and regularity was observed; joy sat on every countenance, and the

mind of every one appeared animated by the same wish, that of making each other happy.

