

## DEVIZES WOOL MARKET DINNER

After the business of the day on Thursday last, upwards of 100 gentlemen connected with agriculture, dined together in the large room at the Castle Inn, to celebrate the anniversary of the Devizes Wool Market: J. E. A. Starky, esq. in the chair. Mr Brown of Horton, Mr Jonathan Grant of Coulston, and Mr Nightingale of Devizes, officiated as Vice Presidents.

.....The CHAIRMAN next proposed the good old favourite toast of *Fox-hunters*. Fox-hunting, he said, was very beneficial – if for no other reason – because it produced a good sweat, and it brought men together who would perhaps never otherwise meet. But it was productive of many other advantages – among them good fellowship and a kindly feeling. When once in the field all jealousies ceased, it mattered not whether one farmed better than another – sportsmen all rode over the same piece of wheat together. Nor did it signify a row of gingerbread what their politics were:- he only appeared the best pleased who was the best mounted. No fox-hunter passed a house with hounds – whether he was from the land's end, or from the land of nod – but the warmest hospitality was extended to him. The sport, too, was an inducement to country gentlemen to live upon their estates, and that was no small advantage. He was aware that political economists said, it did not matter where a man spent his money, whether in England or in France; but he was of a different opinion, and would say that the person who remained at home, even upon a very limited income, did far more good to his country and to the community, than he who lived in splendor abroad.

Mr S. MILLS proposed the health of a Sportsman, who though declining in years, was still young in spirit – a fox-hunter of the first grade – and even now, if at the cover's side would forget all his ailments: he meant Mr Wyndham of Dinton; a gentleman who was known in South Wilts as *The Old English Gentleman* – and surely no one had greater claim to the title; the best of husbands, the kindest of fathers, the most true and sincere of friends, it was impossible to do justice to his character. The toast was drank with loud and repeated cheers.

(*Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1840)

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