



Rowde Weather 1830 - 1906

1830 Feb 4

Temperatures all last week, not above 14 to 16 fah.

1868 Nov 5 Thursday

The Earthquake

The excitement caused in the country by the earthquakes and their devastation in Peru, Chili, California etc. will be by no means diminished by the occurrence of a similar visitation, of a mercifully mild character, in our own country and neighbourhood, and which will serve to remind us that, secure as we have been, in the habit of considering ourselves in our geographical position and its geological character, we are by no means exempt from the dangers of those misfortunes, which have brought such ruin and destruction on our fellow men in the distant lands.

Earthquakes of a mild kind have visited Great Britain in various places, and at various long intervals; but two occurring in the short space of five years, on pretty nearly the same ground, and the last sensible increase in intensity on the first, and taking rather a wider range, is not at all calculated to strengthen our future feeling of security. On Friday last (30th Oct 1868), Exeter, Bristol, Bath, South Wales and the whole district lying between Bristol and Warwick, appear to have felt, in an unmistakable manner, its effects; whilst Devizes and its neighbourhood (lying on this coal producing tract) has no less witnessed and felt the same phenomena and alarm. In Chippenham and its vicinity, the shock was felt alarmingly, and many persons remained up for a considerable time afterwards, afraid to go to bed.

At Grittleton House, it was felt distinctly.

At Rowdeford (Mr Locke's) the servants came down stairs in great alarm, and consternation prevailed through the village.

In the house of the Rev Mr Edgell at Bromham, the bells rang, and the furniture gave evident symptoms of movement; and in many other houses in the village, it was scarcely less felt. Whilst at Westbrook, and on the high land above Bromham, many people were seriously alarmed; and one or two got up from their beds.

At Potterne, Bishops Cannings, Etchilhampton, Allington, Stanton, Wedhampton, Urchfont, etc; the same indications were noticed and fears exhibited.

In Devizes, every part of the town furnishes some who felt its influence.

Most of the sergeants at the Militia Stores, some of whom had, during their sojourn in the Mediterranean and other places, experienced similar indications, immediately recognised the character of this. In the heart of the town, it was so associated with the idea of some heavy object passing, that it was comparatively unheeded, but in detached quiet places in the outskirts, its peculiarity was unobserved, although in each case, some feature of the event was more immediately noticed, than others.

At Hillworth House, Mr Meek was sitting in his library reading, when the whole room was suddenly shaken, as if by some terrific explosion, and he at once became sensible that it must either have been an earthquake or that some great explosion had occurred, his impression being that the gas works had blown up.

On the London Road, those sitting in their chairs, felt themselves raised by a sort of jerk; whilst beds and other furniture moved visibly.

The same thing happened on the Potterne Road, and one lady who was washing her hands, felt two distinct oscillations of the washing stand, and a tremendous settling down of the basin after these had passed away. Mr Blatchley living on this road, fearing a repetition of the shock, quitted his house for a time.

At Longcroft, on the Nursteed Road (at Mr Waylen's) in addition to the ordinary incidents, a pane of glass was cracked.

In Lansdowne Grove, The Market Place, and Bridewell Street, oscillations and other effects were felt, although differently described by each individual, a thing by no means surprising, when one of the causes of these discrepancies is taken into account –viz—the abrupt dispelling of our faith in the solidity and stability of the earth. Dr Burder the acute and accurate meteorologist of Clifton, says he observed “No prolonged rumbling sound nor rocking or rattling of furniture or windows”. Whilst here, nearly all spoke of the rocking of the furniture and windows, and described the variously – some, as a dull booming sound, like the sea at a distance; others as a heavy passing vehicle; others as a gust of wind; whilst one has described it as a rolling and receding murmur, fading on the ear with soft musical cadence, suggestive rather of a sigh, from the world of spirits, than the groan of the traving earth. Certainly, the sound was unearthly, but if harmonious, very few would wish to hear a repetition of it proceeding from the same cause.

Dr Burder speaks also of a brisk wind blowing at the time Clifton was visited; here however, at the particular moment of the shock, there was scarcely a breath of air but after the subsidence of the earth wave, the wind rose, without being violent, for about five minutes, and then everything again became extremely placid. The time at which it occurred, seem to have been in the quarter at 20 minutes to 11, which this period is pretty generally noted throughout the course of the wave.

1884, Nov 13, Thursday

Rowde – A singular incident illustrating the mildness of the season, has been communicated to us. At the present time, there is in this parish, we are told, a wren sitting in a nest, containing eight eggs.

1885, Aug 6, Thursday

An article regarding local friendly societies holding a fete in Rowde, mentions sports taking place in a field, “around which a very fair course had been marked out; but in consequence of the long drought, the ground was hard and dry in the extreme.”

1890, Sept 4, Thursday

Lunar Rainbow

On Friday night a phenomenon of rare occurrence was witnessed in the neighbourhood of Devizes. At about 8.30pm a splendid lunar rainbow was seen in the North-West heavens. On the Bath Road, by the iron bridge, it was seen to great advantage, faint at first, but gradually increasing in brightness. By the time those who observed it when they were at the iron bridge had got half-way up Caen Hill, it was at its best, it then extended from the iron bridge to the high ground on the left of the road, and there was lost to sight. It covered quite one-sixth of the sky.

On the outer side, it was a dusky orange, and on the inside, a pale green. The moon was behind a cloud at that time, though no rain was falling then. The bow grew gradually fainter, and disappeared by the time St Peter's Church was reached. Those who saw it, are to be congratulated on having witnessed so rare a spectacle; few people having the good fortune to see more than one, in the course of their life.

1893, Nov 9

The Earthquake

The shock of the earthquake which was reported all over the west of England on Thursday evening last, was distinctly felt by a number of people in the district.

1895, Feb 21

Kind action by Mr Colston

To relieve the distress caused in Devizes by the recent severe weather, Mr Colston has this week, very kindly found employment for between 30 & 40 men, who were out of work, in cutting wood and making faggots. A large number of the faggots so made, have been distributed amongst the labourers of Bishop Cannings and Horton, and we hear that Mr Colston has very kindly given away two railway trucks of coal, in Roundway and Rowde.

1896, Dec 17

Earthquake in Devizes

A shock earthquake occurred this morning at 5.30 lasting about half a minute. It was distinctly felt in various parts of the town. For the first few seconds it was sufficiently violent to shake windows, and cause china articles to rattle, and gradually passed off with the peculiar tremulous agitation, characteristic of seismic phenomena. Reports from Marden, Seend, Rowde and Worton, state that the shock was distinctly felt in these neighbourhoods.

1901, Jul 4

Saturday's Thunderstorm. Damage in the district

A storm accompanied by thunder and lightning, passed over Devizes & District on Saturday evening (29th June). It lasted, more or less, for several hours. The lightning made its presence felt.

At Rowde, a servant in the employ of Mrs St George, had a narrow escape; she had just wound one of the clocks, and had hardly left it, when it was struck by lightning, and hurled it into the room in countless pieces.

1902, Nov 6

The mildness of the season

As showing the extraordinary mildness of the season, we may mention that at Mr Henry Brown's house, on the Bath Road, there is at the present time, a water-wagtail sitting on a nest containing four eggs, and that a number of ripe strawberries have this week been picked in Mr R S Gundry's Garden at Hillworth.

1906 Jun 28

Earthquake at Devizes

Distinct seismic tremors were felt in Devizes yesterday morning at about a quarter to 10 o'clock, by several people. The length of the tremors is variously given as from two to ten seconds. The shock was felt over a large area extending from Flintshire on the north, to Plymouth on the south, and from Pembrokeshire on the west, to Barh, Bristo and Birmingham on the east.

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