

April 1914 ...

A few years ago a couple of benches were placed along the Avenue to celebrate the King's Coronation. They became a nice resting place between Town Street and the High Street but now they have become somewhere for youngsters to congregate. The benches have been damaged and people are fed up with the youngsters causing a nuisance, so now the benches are going to be moved. One is going along London Road just beyond the Plough Inn and the other will be put near to the entrance of Brandon Park. On the subject of the park, it has a new owner. Sir John Aird has now bought it from Sir Almeric Paget who is the Cambridge M.P. We've recently seen Sir John's land agents around the park ... anyway, I digress.

I have to say that not all the children are causing a nuisance of themselves. Take the Boy Scouts for instance, they were out in town to celebrate St George's Day and they put on a fine show. They had permission from the school to raise the Union Flag on the school's flagpole overlooking the Market Hill, so firstly the boys assembled around the pole and then saluted the flag as it was raised. Their Assistant Scoutmaster, Percy Wilby, then instructed the boys through their exercises. Percy's dad is the groundsman at the churchyard and Percy also got involved with setting up the church boys' cricket team. I believe he must have had divine intervention when he went to war because he was hit in the chest by a German bullet but escape without serious injury. The bullet struck the New Testament bible he kept in his pocket and diverted its path away from his heart! Oh, I am digressing again, and anyway that's a story for another day. There was quite a crowd who went along to watch the Boy Scouts and afterwards they returned to their Headquarters at the Workman's Hall, on the corner of London Road and the High Street, for an exhibition of their work.

For the older lads there is always football. Brandon had its own league, the Ouse Valley League, which was full of local derby games to bring out the best, and worst, in people. This month Brandon travelled to Elveden to play their last game of the season and came away 2-1 winners. A couple of weeks later they joined up with Weeting to host a couple of end-of-season friendly matches. A team called 'G.E.R. Stratford Rovers' travelled up from East London and Brandon's first team beat them 4-0 but our reserves lost by a single goal to nil. Afterwards all the players and officials went along to the Ram Hotel and had a fantastic dinner in the Billiards Room. In hindsight that would be the last season of football for some of those men.