

## Dent / Belvedere Hotel, The Esplanade, Grange-over Sands

The building on the Esplanade in Grange-over-Sands which became the Dent / Belvedere Hotel was built in 1877 and was originally named Mentone Villa. The initials RMA crossed with a large T on the date stone are the initials of the first owners Richard and Mary Ann Tinkler. but the Tinklers did not live there. Richard was a blacksmith in Grange living in Rose Villa Eggerslack Terrace and Mentone was occupied by Mary Peel until late 1880. The house consisted of 2 well-furnished drawing rooms, dining room, breakfast room, hall and 10 bedrooms according to a sale of its' contents in Dec 1880. The household furniture and bedroom appointments included a library of almost 100 books, Spanish mahogany and walnut furniture, art gems from China, Italian Statuary in Carrara Marble, the sale being organised by auction by Mr Curwen.

In the census of 1881 the property was empty and then had various occupiers until 1889 when Mrs Sherlock occupied the villa until 1894. According to the 1891 census Mrs Sherlock aged 43 a widow from Otley in Yorkshire was a lodging house keeper. At the time of the census there were 21 people living at the property which included 2 servants and 18 visitors 2 of whom appear to be personal friends. The visitors seem to have been 3 separate wealthy families plus servants, 2 families were living on their own means and the other a retired mayor. The house was owned by Mrs Tinkler, Richard having died. On Nov 9<sup>th</sup> 1894 according to a handbill Lowden and Postlethwaite were given instructions by Mrs Sherlock to sell the household furniture.

After the death of Mrs Tinkler the property was owned by their son Alfred. From 1895-1898 it was occupied by Richard Beardsley and after being empty for a short while was then occupied by Elizabeth and Margaret

Dent. Although in the rate books it still appears as Mentone, in the 1901 Census the property now appears as Dent's Private Hotel run by 3 sisters Elizabeth age 31 Margaret 27 and Emily 22.



The Misses Dents had previously in 1899 managed a Temperance Hotel on Main St and had originated from millers in Kings Meaburn. In 1901 the hotel had 9 visitors and 1 servant and was now owned by the Dent sisters. In an article in the Furness Railway Holiday Resorts booklet the Misses Dent are congratulated on providing excellent comfort and convenience for visitors "the establishment being furnished in the most up to date style with coffee and smoking rooms, private apartments en suite and a number of airy comfortable rooms with hot or cold baths and lavatories on each landing". The ladies are reported as being unremitting in their efforts to ensure the enjoyment of their guests. In 1902 the hotel is noted in the Abel Heywood guide as having good stabling and is CTC registered. In 1911 the oldest sister Elizabeth had married Robert Wilson

a coachbuilder and they had a son Christopher. The Wilsons were later owners of the garage which is now the Audi garage in Lindale. Margaret and Elizabeth were joint hotel proprietors the hotel having 18 rooms and there were 13 visitors. In Nov 1920 the business was for sale according to an article in the Lancashire Evening Post. It is noted as having 15 bedrooms, a garage, is freehold and has been in the same hands for many years. The sale was due to the owners retiring. Margaret Dent moved to Hoose Crag Lindale where she died in 1956. The hotel was bought by Mr E H Bentley and Miss A G Bentley and changed its' name to Belvedere Hotel. By 1933 it became RAC registered. By 1961 it was owned by Mrs Bennett and by 1964 had been converted into flats. Mrs Bennett continued to live there until 1972.



*Jan Tomlinson with many thanks for help from Pat Rowland*