

**DECEMBER 1871**

## Wombwell's Menagerie visits Chislehurst



This is one of  
twenty tales  
in our  
Midwinter  
Miscellany



Wombwell's was one of a number of popular travelling exhibitions of wild animals collected from around the world. Posters advertised as many as 14 large wagons full of exotic animals – elephants, lions, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, tigers, zebra and even a polar bear.

The Kentish Advertiser for Christmas Day 1871 reported that the menagerie visited Chislehurst and

***“was honoured by a visit from the Emperor, the Prince Imperial and several attendants. His Majesty appeared to take great interest in the exhibition, venturing to pat one of the lions. The band played “God Save the Queen” and Mozart’s “Gloria” during the Emperor’s visit. We are sorry to record the death of the celebrated White Camel, a loss to the proprietor not easily replaced.”***

(ex- Emperor Napoleon III was living in exile at Camden Place.)

Chislehurst Commons has responsibility for managing the 180 acres of local common land under an Act of Parliament.

The Act made no provision for funding.

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