

OUR FISH  
is fresh daily  
OUR PRICES  
are reasonable

W. W. WARD

Fishmonger, Game Dealer  
and Fruiterer

MARKET HOUSE  
BERKHAMSTED

Telephone 146

Yours now for a  
few pence  
a day



Most gas  
appliances  
can now be  
bought on  
easy H. P.  
terms.

Main 177 16-D  
£20/13/- or 20  
payments of  
24/11 — no P.T.

EASTERN GAS BOARD  
WATFORD DIVISION  
High Street, Berkhamsted

Telegrams :  
MATTHEWS, Berkhamsted

Builders, Contractors  
and Decorators

H. & J. Matthews Ltd.

Funeral Directors,  
Cremations, Embalming

CASTLE STREET, BERKHAMSTED

## A House (and Orchard) for 2d. a year

1607 WAS A BUSY YEAR for Berkhamsted's chief citizens. They were called upon to give "Verdict and Aunswers" when a Survey of the Honour and Manor of Berkhamsted was made by Sir John Dodderidge, one of James I's sergeants-at-law, assisted by three commissioners.

The Survey, remarkable for its great length and interest, proved so valuable in the law-suit which followed the frustrated enclosure of Berkhamsted Common that it was copied from the original parchment rolls and printed "for private circulation" in 1868, together with Norden's Survey of 1616.

Sir John Dodderidge's Survey alone occupies 100 pages, and the writer is indebted to a parishioner for the loan of one of the rare copies of this book.

### Four Hundred Entries

A fascinating section of Dodderidge's Survey gives the names of all the tenants of lands and houses in Berkhamsted and Northchurch, with particulars of their properties and the quit rents. There are some 400 entries. Here is one, in the original spelling, taken from the list of freeholders:

JOHN BISCOE holdeth to him and to his heirs by the tenure and services aforesaid, one message w<sup>th</sup> a backside and orchard on the South side of Barkhamstede called by the name of the Swanne, w<sup>th</sup> one close of arable land knowne by the name of little Buttfeld, conteyning by estimation six acres, lately the land of John Biscoe deceased, The Quitt rent p. annū . . . . . iij<sup>s</sup>

Judged by present standards, a rent of three shillings a year for the Swan Inn and Butts Meadow seems fantastic, and it may be useful to quote this definition of a quit rent: "A small rent paid by

the freeholders and copyholders of a manor in discharge of other services." Peppercorns and flowers were often paid instead of shillings and pence.

For instance, Sir Edward Cary paid "one redd rose" yearly to the King for "the scite, Circuite and precincte" of the Castle, and several freeholders escaped even more lightly by payment of "one Gelloflower [gillyflower] at such tymes as anie Kinge or Queene of England shall be crowned in the Castle of Berkhamsted." No coronation ever took place at our castle (William the Conqueror was merely offered the Crown of England at Berkhamsted in 1066), so it was a waste of time to grow "gillies" to pay the rent!

### The Bull and the Queens Arms

The Swan is not the only hostelry mentioned in Dodderidge's Survey. For the Bull, "with a backside thereunto adjoining," Henry Moody paid 1s. 4d. quit rent a year. The Queens Arms was a little more costly. Francis Barker paid 1s. 10d. a year for "one message or tenement w<sup>th</sup> thappurences called the Queenes armes, as it is now divided w<sup>th</sup> the garden and orchard adjoining lately purchased of one Mr. Young."

Was the "Talbot" another inn? If so, it was held by Thomas Newman—the rector, of all people! This property was "on the south side of Barkhamstede" and the quit rent was 3s. 6d.

### Family Names

Many surnames in the 1607 Survey still appear in local directories, though not necessarily with the same spellings—Duncomb, Addams, Blount, Glenister, Howe, Bayley, Roberts, Reynoldes, Todde, Newman, Griffin, Hill, Ward, Eggleton, Bates, Hall, Fenn, Gates, Gregorie, Burton, Turner, Percivall, Dell, Palmer, Harding, Gery, Wingfield, Norris, Holliday, Bristowe, Martine.

But some of the place-names cannot be identified. Sharpes Horne was the name of a close above "little Mill felde," and Little Strawberry Close was near the Castle bank. But where were Shingle Grove, Readinges, Fowlstowe, Shep-

### Ruggins Lane

A reader has discovered in an old deed the name "Ruggins Lane," believed to be the former name of Park Street or some other by-road in the vicinity, between the High Street and the River Bulbourne.

pards, Pillardes, Prentice Grove, Delley Croft, Hunger Hill, Crowches Croft, Chalkedell Close, Stirrops, Stonycrofte, Baslettes, Pegges Land, South Salmons Field, and Sowe Mead? And where was Lyons Corner? Surely there wasn't a house at this spot to give 17th century Berkhamsted a Lyons Corner House!

"Middle Rowe" is easily identified: it is the old name of the shops between the One Bell public-house and St. Peter's Church. Quit rents were rather high, as they deserved to be in the town's shopping centre. Alexander Bayley paid 1s. 8d. a year for "one tenement with a backside in the middle rowe," and 1s. for another tenement "neere to the Church raille." Other freeholders in Middle Row were William Tinker (11d.), William Howe (8d.), John Surman (6d.), Robert Heidon (3s.), and Thomas Rogers (4s. for two tenements).

### In Castle Street

Castle-street rents varied considerably. For "one tenement with a backside" Thomas Todde paid twopence a year; George Hill and William Axtell paid a

### Open Air Council

According to Dodderidge's Survey of 1607, the Courts Leete of Berkhamsted were sometimes held in the open air.

The Survey states: "Uppon some extraordinary occasion (as in the tyme of sicknes) the same Courtes . . . have bene kepte at an Oake within the Parke neere unto the sayd Castell: and at a Willowe without the said Parke uppon a moore neere unto the said Castell banck."

Normally the courts were "kept within the Castell" on Whit Monday and the Monday after Michaelmas. Two other Courts were held in the Court House on Whit Tuesday and the Tuesday after Michaelmas.

similar quit rent for their tenements and had orchards in the bargain! William Axtell, incidentally, was the father of Daniel Axtell, who was captain of the guard at the trial of Charles I, and was himself executed at the Restoration. Another famous name is recalled by the following entry: "Francis Clympton holdeth . . . one tenement with a little backside lying at the upper ende of Castle streete, lately purchased of Thomas Waterhowse Gent. The Quitt rent per annum 7d." Thomas Waterhowse was the last Rector of Ashridge Monastery, and it is known that he spent part of his retirement in Castle-street. Other Castle-street freeholders of 1607 were John Clark, Henry Field, Richard Oxley, Richard Abower, Edward Shovelor, Raphe Bening, and Richard Batchelor.

### The Durrants Estate

Now for "Northchurch Ende"—and an entry of especial interest to tenants of Council houses on the Durrants Estate: "Henric Sare senior holdeth . . . one Mansion Howse or Capitall Messuage called Durrantes w<sup>th</sup> fifty acres of land by estimation meadowe, pasture, arable and Woodground lying in the parish of Northchurch, late the land of John Sare."

The quit rent was 26s. 6d. a year—less than the weekly rent of one Council house! John Hopkins, rector of Northchurch, Richard Percivall, John Howe, Ralfe Axtell and William Willet (of Exhams) were among the freeholders who, as already mentioned, paid a quit rent of "one gelloflower" whenever a king or queen was crowned at Berkhamsted Castle. But Ralfe Goulding was not so fortunate. He could not "pay it with flowers." For "one tenement with a backside in Northchurch" he paid 4d. a year and also "yeeldeth one halfe harvest-daies worke."

A family name which lives on in one of our "Ends" is that of Nicholas Gosham, who held "two tenements with a backside in Goshams ende in the parish of Northchurch, w<sup>th</sup> three roodes of ground adjoining uppon the nowe dwelling howse of the said Nicholas Gosham deceased, father of the said Nicholas, tenant in possession." The quit rent was 4s. 1d.

Returning to Berkhamsted, we find references to Grubbs-lane (Chesham-road), Friday-street (in Haresfoot Park), and Cokes-lane (King's-road). John Cokes' "tenement with a backside at Cokes lane end" (rent 2d. a year) shows that this lane took its name from a householder and not, as has sometimes been surmised, from an ancient inn known as "The Cock."

### Churchwardens' Payments

Naturally, the Court House is mentioned in Dodderidge's Survey. It was held by the churchwardens "to the use of the Inhabitantes and Parrish of the towne of Barkhamstede," and the annual rent paid to Sir Thomas Vachell was one shilling. For the market house the churchwardens paid 2s. 8d. to the lord of the manor, Northchurch, too, had its "towne howse," with a little garden plot and three acres of land; it was held by the churchwardens of Northchurch, who paid a rent of 6d. to the parsonage.

As a change from shillings and pence, it is interesting to learn that the two watermills were worth £7 8s. per annum.



BEAUTIFY AND PROTECT  
YOUR HOUSE with

SNOWCEM

WATERPROOF CEMENT PAINT

Obtainable in white, cream, pink and silver-cream.

F. SALTmarsh

Builders' and Decorators' Merchants

35 LOWER KINGS ROAD

Telephone: Berkhamsted 360

Frank C. Templing

F.S.M.C.

Optical Practitioner

105

12, LOWER KINGS RD.,

BERKHAMSTED

James Wood & Son

DOMESTIC HEATING and  
GENERAL ENGINEERS  
PLUMBERS

Hand and Motor Mowers  
Re-ground and Overhauled

294, HIGH STREET, BERKHAMSTED

PHONE 94

ESTAB. 1824