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AN ARMOURY IN THE PARISH CHURCH

## The Six Musketeers

References have often been made to Berkhamsted's reluctance to pay Charles I's Ship Money, but to the best of my knowledge details have never been printed of the special rates which were levied from time to time for the Defence of the Realm. As with every other parish, Berkhamsted had to make direct contributions to the cost of the Army and Navy, and was also required to supply its own soldiers and arms. On one occasion, there was a special rate for disarmament!

Several 17th century documents in St. Peter's Church chest give details of the town's financial commitments, with references to the war with the Dutch and to "the speedy building of ships of war."

### POWDER AND SHOT

Of especial interest is an order from the Earl of Essex to the constables of "Barkhamsted St. Peter," dated 1669. All soldiers under the command of the Earl were "to appear at St. Albans... on the 29th day of this instant September compleatly armed," and "bring with them 3 days' pay and 6d. for the mustering." Every "musquetier" was to take "halfe a pound of powder and halfe a bound of bullett."

The order further required the constables to "give notice to all the finders of armes within your said parish whose names are hereunder written that they send in their soldiers compleatly armed and furnished as aforesaid. And that the soldiers make their appearance by 8 of the clock before noone of the Sunday at the syne of the Belle in St. Michaels neere St. Albanes aforesaid that see they may be in a readines to march into the said towne of St. Albanes with their colors. And you are alsoe to make reterne of this warrant at the time and place

aforesaid. Dated the 7th day of September 1669."

The following list shows that 18 townsmen were responsible for equipping six soldiers:

Finders of the Armes	Soldiers
Mr. Napeir Reck (?)	Joseph Philipps
Mr. Pitkin	Sidney Nash
Mr. Ffr. Wetheryd	Thos. Hutchinson
Mr. Edw. Seyme (?)	
Mr. Thos. Hodgson	
Mr. Stacy	
Mr. Willm. Theed	Willm. Chappell
John Nash	
— Woodhouse	
Thos. Payne	
Tho. Topping	
Tho. Waller	
— Reming	Willm. Salisbury
Willm. Reynolds	
Tho. Aldrige	
Mr. Maurice Kellett	Edward Waterton
Mr. Francis Kellett	
John Pole	

It will be seen that the number of "finders of arms" responsible for each soldier varied from one to five, and we may conclude that Mr. Napeir Reck (if that was his name; the writing is indistinct) was the richest man in that he alone had the responsibility of supplying one armed soldier. The pikes, swords, muskets and other arms were kept in St. Peter's Church.

### DISBANDING THE ARMY

I have not had an opportunity of studying the muster rolls of Hertfordshire, showing exactly what the Hundreds, including Dacorum, were to provide in men, arms and horses. However, shortly before the Civil War broke out, Lord Cary's Roll shows every man between the ages of 16 and 60. In 1638, Watford had to find 24 soldiers, 15 corselets, 9 muskets, and some pikes, morions (steel helmets) and swords.

On the restoration of the monarchy, there was a brief period of disarmament. Charles II was compelled to agree to the abandonment of the Army, except for a kind of bodyguard of 5,000. A document in the church chest refers to "An Act for raising of seven score thousand pounds for the compleat disbanding of the whole Army and paying off some part of the Navy." Hertfordshire was ordered to raise £2,800, and Berkhamsted's share was "Twenty pound nyneteene shillings and fowerpence." This demand for payment, dated October 29, 1660, concludes with the ominous words: "You will answer the contrary at your perils."

Documents of this period include a receipt dated September 28, 1661. Mr. Maurice Kellett, of Berkhamsted, subscribed £2 "as a Voluntary Present to His Majesty in pursuance of an Act of Parliament intituled An Act for a Free and Voluntary Present to His Majesty."

### THE KING'S SHILLING

There have always been wars and rumours of wars, so it is not surprising to find that the period of disarmament was short-lived. In 1662 the militia was

reorganised, and while the royal prerogative was asserted, the chief powers were transferred to the Lord Lieutenant of each county. That is why the order of 1669, quoted at the beginning of this article, was issued by the Earl of Essex.

Those were halcyon days for pressgangs, and many an unwary man and boy was tricked by wily recruiting sergeants into accepting the King's shilling. For example, in 1661 a man was sitting by the fire at the George Inn, Hatfield, enjoying a quiet drink, when a soldier pulled out his purse, saying, "Here is all the money I have left of the King's. Here is a round O. Look on it." The unsuspecting man picked up the shilling and was handing it back when the sergeant said, "You are now a soldier." The man threw the shilling upon a bench, saying he would not take it. He retained his civilian status, for the recruiting sergeant was brought before the justices, who were well acquainted with the wiles of pressgangs.

### TO FIGHT THE DUTCH

Shortly after raising money for disbanding the Forces, Parliament required a larger sum for the reorganised militia and for the Navy, then battling with the Dutch fleet.

In the church chest is a "demand note" (March 20, 1664) addressed to Maurice Kellett, Robert Newman and Thomas Topping, "Assessors for Barkhamsted." It refers to "an Act for granting Royall Ayde to his Majesty of twenty foure hundred three score & seaventeene thousand and five hundred pounds for righting of his Majesty against the Dutch to be raysed and paid unto his Majesty within the space of Three yeares payable in manner following, viz. £68,819 9s. by the month for 36 months beginning the 25th day of December, 1664, to be paid in twelve quarterly payments."

### "FAYLE NOT"

Berkhamsted was required "to make a pound Rate within your parish for the some of £30 4s. 7½d., being your proportion of £1,345 16s. 3d. a month charged upon this County... Which said some you are heereby required with all care & dilligence to assece equally by a pound rate upon all landes, tenements," etc.

Again that awful warning: "Fayle not att your perills."

Finally, here is an extract from a Berkhamsted demand note of 1677: "By virtue of an Act of Parliament... for the raising of £34,410 9s. 6½d. by the month for 17 months beginning from the 25th day of March, 1677 (entituled An Act for raising the Sum of £584,978 2s. 2½d. for the speedy building of ships of war)... £15 2s. 2½d. being your proportion of £672 1s. 1½d. a month charged upon this county." No charge was to be made upon, amongst others, "any Master, Fellow or Scholar of suchs Colledge or Hall or in any other Free Schools," hospitals, almshouses, etc.

BEORCHAM.

## EMERGENCY MEDICINE

### Local Arrangements

Arrangements for the emergency supply of medicine now operating in Berkhamsted is as follows:—

### CHEMISTS' ROTA

The week-day evening (6-7 p.m.) and Sunday morning (11.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.) service rota adopted by Berkhamsted chemists for the dispensing of medical prescriptions, is as follows for the current month:—

Aug. 29—Sept. 4: Taylors.

September 5—11: Boots.

September 12—18: Figg.

September 19—25: Dickman.

Sept. 26—Oct. 2: Taylors.

### LIBRARY OPENING TIMES

The Berkhamsted Branch of the County Library is open in Prince Edward Street on the following days and times:—

Monday and Friday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.;

2 p.m. to 5 p.m.; 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 5 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Thursday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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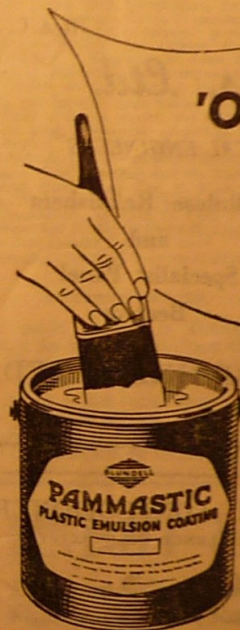
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