

Pressed Beef

Made from the best Meat only, pressed and pickled by a secret process, producing a taste which makes one's mouth water is the reason we sell so much of it.

Try some on our recommendation.

SHOP AT
DERRICK'S

SANDERSON'S

for good footwear

JOHN WHITE - NORVIC
JAMES STEVENSON
KILTIE - CINDERELLA
and other good makes in stock

Repairs a Speciality

Personal Supervision

Proprietress:
(Miss) V. SANDERSON
141-143 High Street, Berkhamsted
Phone 861

H. LEE & SONS

Manufacturers of First Class

MINERAL WATERS

SQUASHES • CORDIALS

NON-ALCOHOLIC WINES

HIGH STREET, BERKHAMSTED

Telephone 106

WHEN FARMERS WERE GIVEN A TITHE DINNER

The Rector's Problems —in 1799

In last month's issue we printed, in full, the private accounts of a bygone rector of Berkhamsted, Dr. John Jeffries, for the year 1759. It was a typical year in his long ministry (1756-1798), and no useful purpose would be served by giving full details of his receipts and payments in other years. However, it is interesting to find that, in 1758, and that 500 bricks were bought for 10s. 6d.

The major part of the rector's income came from tithes, and Dr. Jeffries certainly fared much better than his predecessor (Dr. John Cowper, father of the poet), who received but £115 from that source. Soon after starting his ministry, Dr. Jeffries received between £140 and £150 a year from tithes; the amount rose to £193 in 1782 and to £190 in 1798, the year of his death.

THE TITHE DINNER

Similarly, there was a gradual increase in the cost of the annual tithe dinner given by the rector to farmers and others who paid "great tithes." This was an expensive but traditional event, hated by parsimonious parsons, tolerated by those who recognised the value of "sweetening the customer," and enjoyed by those who relished good food, good ale, and good company. The Berkhamsted tithe dinner in all probability was held at the King's Arms Hotel. The cost of the dinner in 1760 was a little over £4; towards the end of the century it was around £5, and one hopes that a good time was had by all, including the rector.

Dr. Jeffries, with other good sources of income, was in a happier position than his successor, the Rev. Charles de Guiffardiere, whose ministry at Berkhamsted lasted from 1798 until 1809. Let this long-forgotten rector relate his troubles and hopes in his

own words. At the end of Dr. Jeffries' accounts book he penned this frank and extraordinarily interesting statement:

"I succeeded the Rev. Dr. Jeffries in the living of Great Berkhamsted in November 1798, was inducted in January 1799, and continued Mr. Thackeray in the curacy on the same terms as my predecessor, viz., salary £40, besides Easter offerings and Church fees, which, in case they did not together amount to £20, I am to make up to the said sum.

"I paid the Doctor's executor the sum of £66 7s. 6d for fixtures and some furniture, as appears by the schedule annex'd. [This schedule apparently has been lost.] He paid me near £27 for dilapidations on the barn, stables and outhouses, but none for the house, it being in tolerable good condition. The said £27 I received in wines, left in the Doctor's cellar.

"The expense I was put to, on taking possession, exceeded the income of the living for two years, the greatest part of which arose from fees for a dispensation, M.A. degree, presentation fees, etc. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, the patron of the living, and who presented me to it *unask'd*, meant to better my condition by offering it to me, because he thought it much more considerable, as he was pleas'd to say, on my stating to him the income of the living: for agreeable to the statement made by my predecessor it is no more than £220, viz.:

	£	s.	d.
Tithes and Glebe	190	0	0
Lectureship	5	6	8
Easter Offering	17	0	0
Church fees	6	0	0
	£218	6	8

"Out of the said income is to be deducted:

	£	s.	d.
The Curate's salary	40	0	0
His fees and Easter offering ..	20	0	0
Land and House Tax	35	0	0
Poor's rate	10	0	0
Subscription to the Lectureship	1	1	0
	£106	1	0

"To this ought to be added the expense I am at for keeping a gard'ner, as likewise charitable donations, etc.

"Upon perusing some papers left to me by my Predecessor, and finding on receiving the first Tithes that they amounted only to £178 or thereabouts, I resolved to signify to the Landholders my intention of raising them sixpence per acre. They all readily came into this proposal, and I shall see by this year's (1800) receipt what will be the amount of this increase. The Duke of Bridgewater alone demurr'd and refus'd paying 2s. per acre for the two Coldharbour farms, and I shall according to the late survey made by

the parish, be satisfied with 1s. 8d. per acre.

"November 5, 1800. The tithes collected this day according to the new arrangement amount to £217 8s.

"They have of course been rais'd about £40. But besides, I have, according to the power given me by Act of Parliament, sold the Glebe belonging to the living in Northchurch parish, and which produc'd but nine pound, in order to pay off my Land Tax, which amounted to £17, and thus the living is improv'd to nearly £50."

KEEPING RECORDS

Thank, you Mr. de Guiffardiere, for a most revealing statement! Unfortunately, he did not (so far as I am aware) continue his predecessor's practice of keeping annual accounts. Dr. Jeffries was a remarkably methodical man: he loved statistics, and, in the first two pages of the accounts book from which extracts have already been published, set out the number of baptisms, marriages and burials in each of the forty years of his ministry. Moreover, Dr. Jeffries dipped into parish records to see how the numbers compared with those of an earlier generation. Here is a summary:

	Baptisms	Burials	Marriages
1681—1700 ..	479	529	134
1740—1760 ..	741	731	106
1760—1780 ..	933	1028	226
1781—1797 ..	781	677	211

The last line, it will be noted, covers a period of 17 years, not 20 years. Making due allowance for this, there was a remarkable decline in the number of burials, though only a slight difference in the birth and marriage rate. In Dr. Jeffries' own words: "The parish [is] suppos'd to contain 300 houses, 1,500 souls; 95 cottages excus'd Poor's rate."

THE COMMUNICANTS

During Dr. Jeffries' ministry, the Easter offerings (given to the curate to supplement his meagre stipend) averaged between £9 and £12. Unfortunately, we do not know the number of communicants at that time, but records are available from the year 1811 onwards. On Christmas Day, 1811, there were 116 communicants, and the collection amounted to £4 14s. 6d. This was given to poor persons, the largest individual gifts being two of 10s. Payments of 5s. each were made to the clerk and the sexton. On Easter Day, 1812, 77 communicants gave £1 11s. 6d. Thirteen years later—at Easter, 1825—134 communicants gave £3 19s. Names of all poor parishioners who received gifts in cash are listed; many were widows, and occasionally there is some such tragic note as "Ill, since dead."

Surprisingly, there was not a great increase in the number of communicants in early and mid-Victorian days. On Easter Day, 1856, the collection from 134 communicants amounted to £5 9s. 1d. Not an impressive figure, surely, for an age when, it is popularly thought, everybody went to church regularly.

'BEORCHAM'

(To be continued).

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:—

Oct. 31—Nov. 6: Boots.
November 7—13: Figg.
November 14—20: Dickman.
November 21—27: Taylors.
Nov. 28—Dec. 4: Boots.

LIBRARY OPENING TIMES as from November 1st

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

Mon., Tues. and Fri.—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.; 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday—CLOSED ALL DAY.
Thursday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Telegrams:

MATTHEWS, Berkhamsted

Telephone
15

Builders, Contractors
and Decorators

H. & J. Matthews Ltd.

Funeral Directors,
Cremations, Embalming

CASTLE STREET, BERKHAMSTED

A. HART

(A. C. HART FELL.I.R.E.)

for TELEVISION

RADIO, TELEVISION & ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

256 HIGH ST., BERKHAMSTED

Phone 465