

Berkhamsted Notebook

By TOWNSMAN

Safety Measure

Berkhamsted Castle now has a slightly nautical look. No doubt you have seen some white wooden structures just outside the ruined walls, and if you have not been in the grounds since the Pageant you may wonder what purpose they serve. They support life-belts for throwing to anyone who gets into deep water.

The risk of a ducking is greatest, perhaps, in the skating season. In case we have a hard winter, you may like to know that the Citizens' Association received an assurance before the war that skating on the moats would still be permitted without charge, thereby perpetuating an ancient privilege.

Speaking of the Castle, I wish the Ministry of Public Building and Works would use one spelling of the town's name. The sign at the corner of Brownlow Road says *Berkhamstead*. The 'ancient monument' sign opposite Castle Street bridge proclaims *Berkhampsted*. The booklet sold at the Castle, and the 'hours of admission' notice at the gate, say *Berkhampstead*. Some other 'ancient monument' signs in the town are normal, with *Berkhamsted*. Four versions—three too many!

Tatty Posters

I wish the people who go around the town putting up posters advertising dances, concerts, etc., would remove the notices directly the functions are over.

Time after time one sees posters advertising out-of-date events. It has been known for people unable to afford calendars to turn up for meetings a week or a fortnight after they were held. And all the time we have to look at posters which get torn and soiled and sometimes even add to the litter on the pavements.

Signs of the Times

Several readers have commented upon my recent remarks about motorists who arrive at the crossroads and ask the way to Tring and Hemel Hempstead.

A friend tells me that in his opinion Berkhamsted is the worst signposted town in the county. He has often been asked the way to Chesham, Amersham and Potten End by drivers held up by the traffic lights outside Sharlands. On one occasion he gave the information as quickly as possible, only to be reviled by succeeding motorists who were held up for a few seconds and thereby 'missed the lights.' That's what happens when one tries to do a good turn.

A Nice Town

A short time ago the London Appreciation Society paid an afternoon visit to Berkhamsted. It was not a pleasant day; visibility was poor, rain was light but fairly constant, and it was necessary to curtail a visit to the Castle and substitute a short coach tour round the villages before the party proceeded to Berkhamsted School and then to the Parish Church.

Were the 80 visitors dismayed? Not at all. They loved the tour and liked the town. The visit was voted a huge success. And when the time came to depart for London, I heard several people remark that Berkhamsted must be a very nice town to live in.

This, I repeat, was the verdict at the end of what, climatically speaking, was one of the very dreariest days of the year.

A nice compliment to our town, don't you think?

Name and Trade

Visiting the cemetery the other day, I was interested to see the words 'Many years carrier of this town' under the name of Richard Wood, who died in 1877. In other words, he ran a collecting and delivery service for parcels, etc.

It is rare to find a man's profession or trade mentioned on a tombstone unless he was a minister or a soldier. I wonder if the trades of any other bygone Berkhamstedians are engraved on stone?

Home Example

Overheard in the High Street: 'Moy boy eent arf speakin' bad since 'e started gooin' ter school.'

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