

# Berkhamsted Notebook

By TOWNSMAN

## Favourite Sights

What is your favourite local scene? As a complete change from I-spy-eyesores and all that, I asked a number of residents to list, in order of preference, the building, group of buildings or corner of Berkhamsted which they find particularly pleasing to the eye.

Here are their replies:

1, Incent's Cafe; 2, Ashlyns School; 3, the canal looking west from Lower King's Road bridge.

1, St. Peter's Church; 2, Town Hall; 3, Castle grounds.

1, Heath House; 2, Post Office; 3, High Street at night, when the lights are bright and the traffic is light.

1, The Crooked Billet; 2, The Crown; 3, The Lamb.

1, High Street from Derrick's shop to Monk's Cottage, seen by the light of the setting sun; 2, Mr. J. Hutton's house and shop (108 High Street); 3, the Economic Forestry's Group's office building, formerly Durrant's.

1, Berkhamsted School; 2, St. Peter's Church and Court House; 3, Dean Incent's.

1, St. Peter's Church and Court House; 2, Berkhamsted School seen through lych-gate; 3, Boxwell House.

1, Sacred Heart Church; 2, Post Office; 3, National Provincial Bank.

Well, there's variety for you! My own selection? 1, Castle grounds seen from a train; 2, St. Peter's Church viewed from Castle Street on a sunny morning; 3, the market place on a bright, busy Saturday.

## Victoria School

Last month's *Review* contained a vast amount of information about Victoria School, and it is right that our minds should be on present-day needs and future improvements.

I agree with Canon Brown's comment that the whole town owes a great debt to Victoria School, but do not go along with him when he adds 'perhaps most of all in these two decades since the war.'

Statistically this may be so—after all, the town keeps on growing—but to my mind the great days of Victoria (and for that matter Park View) Schools were when they served the vast majority of the town's boys and girls right up to school-leaving age. There was no Ashlyns School, and chances of obtaining scholarships to Berkhamsted School or to any other grammar school were infinitesimal.

A few poorly paid men and women

teachers, coping with classes that were certainly no smaller than those of today, and working under conditions of great austerity, raised what was then called elementary education to an exceptionally high standard.

As one of hundreds of grateful Old Victorians, I hope the school will continue to be what it has always been—one of the town's greatest assets.

## Nameless Alley

I have been asked if the little alley between Back Lane (all right, Church Lane) and High Street has ever had a name.

I don't think so. It is the town's shortest right-of-way, and undoubtedly dates from the time when Grab All Row (the name given to the shops in front of Back Lane) was built on the roadside verge hundreds of years ago.

## An Old Bridge

A friend in Devon recently sent me some photographs he took in and around Berkhamsted in 1908. One shows the old iron canal bridge in Lower King's Road; it was of the latticed see-through type, so there was no need to lift up tiny tots to see the locks and boats.

It may not be widely known that in the 1880s, when a road to the station was suggested, there was much support for a straight road which would have entered the High Street on the west side of the International Stores. Instead, the present curving Lower King's Road was preferred. Chalk from King's Road, I understand, was carted down the hill to raise the road over the marsh to the level of the canal bridge.

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