

BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



In and around Berkhamsted by 'Townsmen'

FILLING THE GAPS

Besides building on pastures new, Berkhamsted continues to fill in the gaps in some of the town's older streets. A big re-development scheme is in progress at the corner of Charles Street and Kings Road; builders are busy, too, on the nursery slopes of Whitehill, behind the railway.

In recent years Chesham Road has acquired a number of extra houses without many visible signs of change. Now, at long last, there is a footpath throughout its length. And tons and tons of chalk have been removed from the tall, steep bank just above the entrance to Green Lane, a name which I hope will be retained, whatever its colour, when a new housing scheme has been completed. At the moment the entrance from

Chesham Road looks like a smaller version of the white cliffs of Dover.

Older residents will remember the horsepond which formerly occupied this spot. It provided a very good pull-up for cart-horses before starting the steep haul towards Brickhill Green. There was a smaller horsepond a third of the way up the hill, another near the entrance to the drive to Ashlyns Farm, and a fourth, a very large pond, on that once pleasant open space, Brickhill Green.

UNCOMMON SPELLING

A reader writes: "I have been looking at some 'Law of Property Act 1925' notices on the Common, which, in both heading and text, use the spelling 'Berkhampstead Common'. A friend tells me that

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this is the official and legal spelling. Is this so?"

No. It is a form which, nowadays, is used by people who are not conversant with local usage.

REUNION IN BERKHAMSTED

There was a pleasant sequel to the publication, in last month's *Review*, of Beorcham's article entitled "The Curate's Flopement". It described the runaway marriage of the Rev. J. C. Browne, who was a curate of Berkhamsted St. Peter over 130 years ago.

Shortly after the article appeared, an 80-year-old man, who came to Berkhamsted eight years ago, rang up to say that he was a great-grandson of Mr. Browne. He was astonished to learn that a great granddaughter of the curate was also living in the town; it was from the mother of this lady that "Beorcham", many years ago, obtained much of the information upon which the article was based.

And so two cousins (how many times removed?) have met for the first time, and in the Rev. James Browne's old parish!

STATION ROAD

The Urban Council has been treating a number of streets to new nameplates. Some curiosity has been aroused by two plates on the railway wall facing Castle Street, one proclaiming Lower King's Road (left), the other Station Road (right). Some people,

myself included, were under the impression that the eastern approach to the railway station was called Station Road, but the road of this name obviously stops at Castle Street bridge!

As there are no houses in this section it really doesn't matter which name is used. Originally it was an extension of Castle Street, constructed from the canal bridge to the "new" railway station, which was opened in 1875. Lower King's Road was not made until 1885. Station Road did not exist at that time, either, though there was a track to some canal-side cottages east of the Crystal Palace public house, as well as a private road to the old railway goods depot, which for many years has been in private hands.

A COSTLY PROJECT

Several people have asked if any progress has been made towards starting a local museum. Well, the Local History Society followed up the Bygone Berkhamsted exhibition with a talk by Mr. Gareth Davies, Director of Verulamium

Museum, and he left no doubts in the minds of his audience that a museum would be a costly undertaking.

It may not be widely known that Berkhamsted is not the only place in West Hertfordshire which would like to have a museum. Hemel Hempstead wants one, and so does Kings Langley. As the cost-factor is all-important, I imagine that the borough stands the best chance of achieving its ambition, but local patriotism forces me to say that Berkhamsted, historically the most important place in the area, should be first in the field!

Several buildings have been suggested as likely homes for a museum, but their availability is highly questionable. For a start, it would be most helpful if, when local government changes are made next year, a room or two could be spared in either the Civic Centre or Boxwell House for the Local History Society's documents, pictures, etc. A central archive could well be the nucleus of a museum.

PILGRIM'S WAY

A Canadian reader, who was at school in Berkhamsted some forty years ago, writes to say that she has always been curious about Marlin Chapel and the path leading to it via Angle Place and Gallows Lane. Is it true, she asks, that pilgrims used this path to the now-ruined chapel?

No. There must be some confusion with the footpath through the Park and over the Common to Ashridge, which, rather fancifully, has occasionally been called a pilgrims' way.

Speaking of Angle Place, you may not know that this very ancient right-of-way, which now starts in Doctors Commons Road, originally linked up with other paths at what is now the junction of King's Road and Charles Street.

THE 'REVIEW'

The editor would be grateful if all contributions to the next issue of the *Review* could reach him by 7th May. Thank you.



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