

BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



In and around Berkhamsted

by 'Beorcham'

Crested China

Since writing about china mementos with illustrations of local scenes, I have been shown some very interesting specimens. For instance, a reader brought along a plate (made in Bavaria) depicting St. Peter's Church. Another showed me a moustache cup (ever seen one?) with a drawing of the Town Hall. It was made in Germany!

I am also reminded that Goss crested china was very popular in years gone by. Visitors took specimens home to show where they had been, and some amassed large collections.

What do we have today? There are some very nice table mats with local scenes, and Berkhamsted rock, with the name stamped right through, is sometimes available!

Perhaps some china relics of the past will be included in an exhibition which, it is hoped, will be staged in aid of the Court House Restoration Fund. For some time thought has been given to a special display of paintings, photographs and maps of local interest, and it would not surprise me if this developed into an exhibition on the scale of "Bygone Berkhamsted", which was such a big success in 1972.

Beating the Bounds

The revival of the ancient custom of beat-

ing the bounds of the parish was suggested at a recent meeting. It would make a change from the conventional sponsored walk, but I wonder if we have the stamina to follow in the footsteps of our great-grandfathers?

The last ceremony was held in July, 1903, and on the first day a start was made at 7 a.m. The route, a very winding one, was from Whitehill to Northchurch Common, down New Road, then to Dudswell, Norcott Hill, Thunderdell Wood, the Old Dairy, Thunderdell Lodge, Old Park Lodge, Ashridge gardens, Frithsden, Martin's Pond (Potten End) and back to Whitehill. There were periodical halts for boys to be bumped and other participants thrashed (very lightly, of course) to give them cause to remember the boundary line.

Two days later the party met again for a shorter tour, starting at 2 p.m. This time the route was from Cross Oak to Gallows Lane, Hockeridge Wood, Chesham Road, Haresfoot Park, and back to Cross Oak.

War-time Relic

The other day I paid a visit to Alsford's timber yard to see what must be the largest shed for many miles around. A beam of extraordinary length still bears an inscription ("Salus populi suprema lex") dating from the time when the shed was occupied

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by the Inns of Court Officers' Training Corps in the 1914-18 War.

There was accommodation for hundreds of soldiers—and hundreds of civilians, too, when the townspeople were invited to concerts organised by the troops, among whom were many actors and musicians. There must be dozens of old residents who recall the splendid entertainments (including teas) which the soldiers provided for the children of the town.

St. John's Well

"Can you tell me the exact site of St. John's Well and when it ceased to function?" asks a reader.

Well, the water bubbled out of the ground on the east side of the lane, halfway between the High Street and the cottages at the bottom of the lane. There was a fairly constant flow of water down the roadside ditch until pumping lowered the water table. I cannot be sure when the spring ceased to function, but I fancy that it was in the mid 1930s. Please correct me if I am wrong.

A Disgrace to the Town

Speaking of water, how much longer have we to wait for proper drainage at the central crossroads? Periodically we have a lake which I have joked about in the past, but it isn't funny to be drenched by the spray thrown up by passing cars. For such a state of affairs to exist so long in the centre of the town is absolutely scandalous.

Another Amalgamation!

Have you noticed that this feature is contributed by "Beorcham", not by "Townsmen"? There is really no change of authorship; it so happens that shortage of space prohibits two separate articles by the same writer. Naturally, I prefer to go on using the pen-name which has appeared in over 400 consecutive numbers of the Review.

"In and Around Berkhamsted" enables me to present a variety programme, with comments on current affairs as well as items of local historical interest. And there is still a lot of interesting information in the pipeline!

THE COUNTY LIBRARY

The County Library in King's Road is normally open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. except on Saturdays (9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Wednesday when it is closed.

CITIZENS ADVICE

The Citizens' Advice Bureau will be open to help you at the "Gable" in Prince Edward Street on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. The telephone number is Berkhamsted 6930.

STEWARDSHIP

The amount contributed to the St. Peter's and All Saints' stewardship fund in January was £1,107.54.



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