



BERKHAMSTED REVIEW

EDITORIAL Mr. H. D. Woodward
53 Bridgewater Road Tel. 2723

ADVERTISEMENTS Mr. C. J. Gosling
8 Bridgewater Road Tel. 3194

**CIRCULATION and
MAGAZINE COMMITTEE** Mr. A. C. Conway
20 Murray Road Tel. 6798

TREASURER Mr. M. J. Robinson
36 Trevelyan Way Tel. 3559

In and around Berkhamsted

by 'BEORCHAM'

Just an Idea

Seeing the sights of Berkhamsted during the Christmas holiday, a visitor said he was surprised that Back Lane was in such a woebegone, run-down state when it was capable of being transformed into a major attraction. Picking his way over uneven, neglected cobblestones, he spoke enthusiastically of the Shambles at York and the famous "lanes" at Brighton, and thought that Back Lane could be transformed into a charming little street of boutiques, antique shops and a cafe or two.

Well, that's a new slant on a very old subject. In fact, there have been two recent improvements—the Court House restoration, and a commendable face-lift for the little building next door to Tesco's.

It's the part in between which has such a forsaken appearance. Little garages have replaced old cottages, admitting a little more light into a lane lined by the backs of shops and clouded by fire escapes that are as hideous as they are essential. Honestly, would anyone really like to have a boutique or cafe with such a prospect?

Many years ago there was much talk of pulling down the whole row of shops in front of Back Lane to restore the original

building line from what is now Tesco's to the Court House. Such a scheme was never more than a dream; today it would cost an oil sheikh's ransom.

Upstairs, Downstairs

Having heard references to Lady Berkhamsted in the television series, "Upstairs, Downstairs," a reader asks if there is any such person in real life. No; the title was obviously chosen for safety's sake!

However, in years gone by the town's name did appear in honours lists. In 1917 the Marquis of Carisbrooke (eldest son of Princess Beatrice) received the second title of Earl of Berkhamsted. He was especially interested in the Y.M.C.A., and when war-time huts in Lower King's Road were reopened as a social centre in 1920, the ceremony was performed by the Countess of Berkhamsted.

In 1726, George II's third son was created Marquis of Berkhamsted, but the title became extinct on his death without issue in 1765.

Not the Crossroads!

As we now have about 200 named roads, ways, avenues and so on, we cannot be

expected to know them all. Recently, a van driver had to ask several people the way to Crossways. "I should think it's where the traffic lights are," was one suggestion.

East and West

A friend who takes local history classes in east Hertfordshire tells me that the students know so little about our side of the county that he might just as well mention Ghana as Berkhamsted. I suppose we could say much the same in reverse. Bishops Stortford and Ware might be in Siberia for all the interest we take in the far side of one of England's smallest counties.

This lack of knowledge or interest was formerly blamed on bad communications between east and west. Before the motoring era, a journey even to Hertford took a very long time. It still does so if one has to use such little public transport as still survives.

I have just been looking through Bradshaw's Railway Guide for 1910. It shows that by making rapid changes at Watford, St. Albans and Hatfield, one could leave Berkhamsted at 7.43 a.m. and arrive at Hertford by 9.44. Later in the day the connections were not so good. It was also possible to go to Hertford by train via Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable and Hatfield; with the best connections the journey took 2½ hours.

Where Is It?

A reader has shown me a guide book published by a famous motoring organisation. In the few lines devoted to Berkhamsted, visitors are advised to see the Castle ruins, St. Peter's Church (Saxon doorway) and 17th century almshouses.

I would very much like to see that Saxon doorway. Can anyone tell me where it is? Perhaps we should form a search party.

The Workhouse

Absent from my very large collection of pictures of local interest is a photograph of Nugent House, as the workhouse was called in its last years before being pulled down in the mid-1930s. It was scarcely a good subject for the camera, and the high enclosing brick wall was distinctly off-putting. All the same, if a photograph is available, I would

like to borrow it for copying.

By the way, a schoolteacher tells me that there seems to be dearth of local pictures of the inter-war period. Yet this was a time when photography became really popular, and there must be many interesting pictures taken by amateurs.

STEWARDSHIP

The amount contributed to the Stewardship Fund of St. Peter's and All Saints in December was £1,013.02.

REVIEW

Remember the last day for copy is the 7th February!



**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
BUILDING SOCIETY**

**makes
your money
make
more money**

43 Marlowes

Hemel Hempstead

Tel: 56443/54155

Local Agent
Western Insurance and Mortgage Service
29/33 Lower Kings Road
Berkhamsted
Tel. Berkhamsted 5877