

BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



EDITORIAL
9 Shrublands Road

Mr. H. D. Woodward
Tel. 2723

ADVERTISEMENTS
23 North Road

Mr. Neil Cowan
Tel. 4916

CIRCULATION and
MAGAZINE COMMITTEE
20 Murray Road

Mr. A. C. Conway
Tel. 5798

TREASURER
36 Trevelyan Way

Mr. M. J. Robinson
Tel. 3559

In and around Berkhamsted

by 'BEORCHAM'

A Local Museum?

Many people are wondering what use will be made of No. 222 High Street when the National Westminster Bank transacts all its local business in the branch on the opposite side of the street.

No. 222 is one of our architectural gems. It has a notable history, too, dating from 1737, when the Bourne Charity School and apartments for the master and mistress were built. In 1853-4 there was much rebuilding and the handsome facade dates from this period.

The scholars were transferred elsewhere in 1875, but eighteen years later the old Bourne School became the first home of Berkhamsted School for Girls. Then, after the girls moved to a new school in King's Road in 1902, the Union of London and Smith's Bank moved in. Through successive amalgamations the bank has taken great care of the building and there was a most commendable face-lift two years or so ago.

But what of the future? Would not this fine building make a splendid home for a museum and art gallery? The situation is ideal, and one assumes that the building lacks nothing in security devices!

If we are ever to have a museum in the Dacorum district, surely it should be in the most historic town, Berkhamsted. Hemel Hemp-

stead does not have to have all the plums. But how can a dream be turned into reality now that local authorities have to cut expenditure to the bone?

Have you any suggestions?

The Beulah Chapel

Like the Methodist Church, the little Beulah Chapel in King's Road is to be sold. Built in 1889 by the Strict Baptists, it adjoins a row of four houses of the same period. For some years, however, there was an open space as far as the house at the corner of Butts Meadow; then two more houses were built, leaving a narrow alley leading to a small garden behind the chapel.

The building was taken over by the Girl Guides some years ago and I understand that its small size is the main reason for parting with it. Kelly's Directory of 1902 credited the chapel with 120 sittings, while Loosley's Directory more modestly quoted 100. Even that must have been a tight squeeze!

The Flypaper Man

Talking about some of the town's old characters, an elderly reader recalled an old fellow who went from door to door selling flypapers—in other words, sticky sheets which were attached to gas brackets and other high points to trap and poison flies.

Clive Birch, in his sumptuous *Book of Chesham*, mentions the Flypaper Man who toured Chesham and Berkhamsted selling papers impregnated with black treacle and arsenic. He sang this little song:

Oh! those tormenting flies,
Catch 'em alive, catch 'em alive,
Tormenting flies.

Completing the "commercial", he said: "Flypapers a penny each, two for three ha'pence... Thank you, kind lady."

Nowadays we have aerosols—and fewer flies!

Search Party

I have just met an American visitor who was trying to locate his war-time billet in Berkhamsted. "I know it was on your main street," he said, "but I cannot find it."

I could only suggest that it was either The Homestead or an adjoining house, both of which were replaced in 1958 by the shops opposite the Outspan building.

Oddly enough, The Homestead had a slender but interesting link with the founder of Pennsylvania. R. A. Norris, in his book on St. Peter's Church, says that William Penn visited Christopher Woodhouse at The Homestead and tried to induce Gulielma, Christopher's daughter, to go to his colony in America.

Woodhouse, by the way, was the last bailiff (mayor) of the borough of Berkhamsted.

Links with Chesham

Mr. John Mullett has given me a copy of a photograph which appeared in *Motor Traction* (November, 1910), showing a London and North Western Railway "Foden" steam wagon and trailer which "made several runs daily between Berkhamsted and Chesham, taking a load three times heavier than horse vehicles."

Appropriately, a heavily laden cart is shown beside the "Foden" on a steep hill through Hockeridge Wood.

The photograph proves that much of the valuable Chesham goods traffic was retained by the L.N.W.R. long after the Metropolitan Railway opened a station at Chesham in 1889. Until that time Berkhamsted was the nearest station, and Chesham coachmen and carters were sometimes blamed for wearing out our roads! Indeed, our Buckinghamshire neighbours were expected to contribute towards the cost of making Lower King's Road in 1885.

In 1879 the *Berkhamsted Times* advertised a new horse omnibus service which charged one

shilling for an inside seat and 9d. for an outside seat for the journey from the George Hotel, Chesham, to the Castle Hotel, Berkhamsted. From Ashley Green to Berkhamsted or Chesham the fare was 6d. This was beyond the means of many people, some of whom regularly walked the five hilly and formerly winding miles between the two towns.

Today the bus fare to Chesham is 26p.

Ever so Humble

Overheard during the heat-wave: "It's not the heat, it's the high humility I can't stand."

IMPORTANT NOTICE THE REVIEW

Please send items for the 'Review' to 9, Shrublands Road, in future. Contributions, legibly written or typed, should reach the Editor by midnight of the 7-8th of each month!



**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
BUILDING SOCIETY**

**makes
your money
make
more money**

43 Marlbowes

Hemel Hempstead

Berkhamsted Agents:

**WESTERN INSURANCE
SERVICES LTD.**

29-33 LOWER KINGS ROAD,
BERKHAMSTED. TEL. 5877