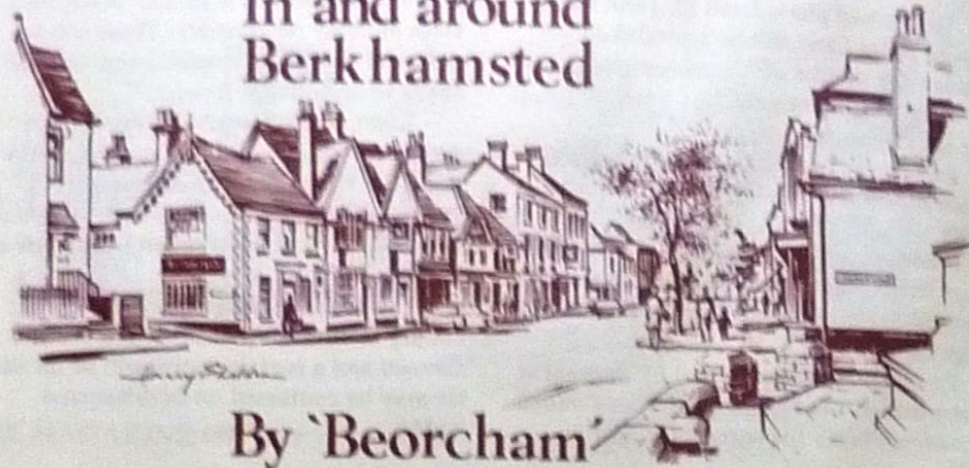


# In and around Berkhamsted



By Beorcham

## LITTLE GADDESSEN

I have spent many hours enjoying Canon Howard Senar's handsome new book entitled "Little Gaddesden and Ashridge." It is the most lavish local history book I have ever seen: large format, over 200 pages, and more than 70 illustrations, most of them excellent photographs.

Little Gaddesden would probably have had an interesting history if there had never been an Ashridge, but the monks and early farmers, the gentry and estate workers, and now the college and villagers provide a vast fund of information, and Canon Senar knows how to use it. His research is surely unsurpassed.

And he does not forget that history is being made all the time. He tells us a great deal about modern changes and events, right up to 1982. Scores of present day villagers will find their names in this book, and perhaps descriptions of their houses and activities.

Did you know that General Kitchener was at Ashridge on the Sunday before the 1914 war broke out? That in the second World War George VI visited the wounded at Ashridge and then had luncheon with his officers in a large barn for grading and packing apples at Hudnall Farm?

This is one of the most quotable books I have ever read. There are hours of interesting reading for anyone who enjoys homely history and the English countryside. Canon Senar was rector of Little Gaddesden for 20 years and his book is published by Phillimore of Chichester. The price is £12.50.

## OUR VISITORS

At this time of the year many former residents call to see if Berkhamsted is as nice as it was when they lived here. Comments vary from "Berkhamsted has changed for the worse" to "I still like the old town."

One family said that if they came back they would try to find a house at Potten End because the town is so noisy.

American callers have not been numerous this year, but I met a very cheerful man from Baltimore who had not been to England since he was stationed in Berkhamsted for a short time in 1944. He couldn't remember much of the town, but our weather was better than in war-time!

Then there was a family who fell in love with St. Peter's Church and enjoyed a short conducted tour. "It's so huge," said a lad of thirteen or so. "Almost like a cathedral," said his sister.

Speaking of holiday visitors, I understand that many inquiries are made at the County Library now that it displays a "Tourist Information" notice. The official town guide is helpful, but I think that something on the lines of the Northchurch Women's Institute's folder ("Visitors to Northchurch: we invite you to look around") would be very helpful for people who are here for only a short time.

## A FORGOTTEN BRANCH LINE

Referring to my comments last month on the early days of the railway, a reader points out that Lord Brownlow's refusal to allow the line to go over the Ashridge estate did not stop his successors having their own private entrance and waiting room at Berkhamsted station.

This entrance ceased to be private many years ago, and if Lord Brownlow had not been so lavish I doubt whether we would

have two entrances today. Many readers will recall the black coach-house near the north entrance which was used for his lordship's carriages.

By the way, I was wrong in stating last month that the only branch railway line in the Dacorum district was the one from Harpenden to Hemel Hempstead. The very first branch line in the south of England was the one from Cheddington to Aylesbury, which started and ended in Buckinghamshire, but passed through Hertfordshire. The line was opened in 1839 and closed for passenger traffic in 1953, and the only intermediate station, Marston Gate, was in the Dacorum district.

## THE MILKY WAY

Recently I met a man who said that he was born in Berkhamsted 80 years ago but very seldom came our way. His father, R. M. Tutt, was a milkman whose dairy was in what is now part of the shop on the west side of the Civic Centre. In 1903 the business was sold to J. Stupples, whose main shop was in Castle Street.

Old inhabitants recall the time when a number of cows had a daily walk from Millfield to Castle Street, where they were milked on Mr. Stupples' premises and then sent back to fine pastures via Station Road and Gravel Path.

By the way, Mr. Tutt said he had been told that Clementine Hosiier, who married Winston Churchill, lived in Berkhamsted, and asked if her house was still standing. I

## COPY DATES FOR THE REVIEW

Your copy should reach the Gardener's Arms, Castle Street by the Friday night. Please TYPE or WRITE CLEARLY, preferably on large sheets of paper, leaving a wide margin round your copy.

FRIDAY SEP 9



## IN AND AROUND BERKHAMSTED

By 'Beorcham' (continued)

said it was two doors from Rectory Lane, bearing an appropriate brass plate, and he hurried down the High Street like an adolescent.

### OVER THE BRIDGE

In recent references to canal improvements I omitted to say "Thank you" for the new wooden footbridge over the Bulbourne from Park Street to the canal towpath. This is a very useful short cut for walkers and by the time these words are printed it is likely that the rather steep rise to the towpath will be replaced by steps. It is also likely that we shall have a new footbridge from the towpath to St. John's Well Lane. The present makeshift is adequate but very, very rough.

### ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Recently I spent a little time looking through the Berkhamsted parish magazine for 1883. The September number contained a rather charming report of the Sunday School treat.

At one o'clock 350 children assembled at the Court House and proceeded to the church for a short service. A procession was then formed, headed by the Church of England Temperance Drum and Fife Band, playing a lively march, accompanied by their teachers. The children, with colours flying, marched up the High Street and Kings Road to Kingshill, to which Mrs. Lucas had kindly invited them.

After cricket, football, trap and ball and other games, there was tea at 3.30, which, as usual, was fully appreciated. Each class then formed round its teacher and raced for knives, toys, etc., or scrambled for sweets which Mrs. Lucas generously showered upon them. Then followed races for hats, scarves and other articles.

At 7.30, after three cheers for Mrs. Lucas, Mr. Bedford, the Rev. D. H. Macnamara and the teachers, the children, again headed by the band, filed through the gate, each receiving a bun at the hands of their kind hostess.

### FACADE

The poems of Edith Sitwell set in the music of William Walton.

On Saturday, 1st October, The Chiltern Sinfonietta will give a performance of *Facade* in St Peter's Church, with Peter Tinlin and Jean Green reciting Edith Sitwell's poetry. Many of the poems were written in close collaboration with Walton in the months prior to the first performance in 1922, and the poetry is a striking and essential part of the music. The words, though often amusing, are less important for their meaning than for their sounds and rhythms.

Since 1922, the work has been performed in several different versions. No score was published until 1951, and that version is often regarded as the definitive one. However in 1977, Walton began to reassemble various numbers which had been lost to view since the early performances in the 1920s. In 1979 he published *Facade 2*, a compilation of this early material.

The Chiltern Sinfonietta's concert will include some of this very early Walton, and also readings from Edith Sitwell's other poetry.

The Concert is presented by the Cowper Society in aid of the Organ Fund.