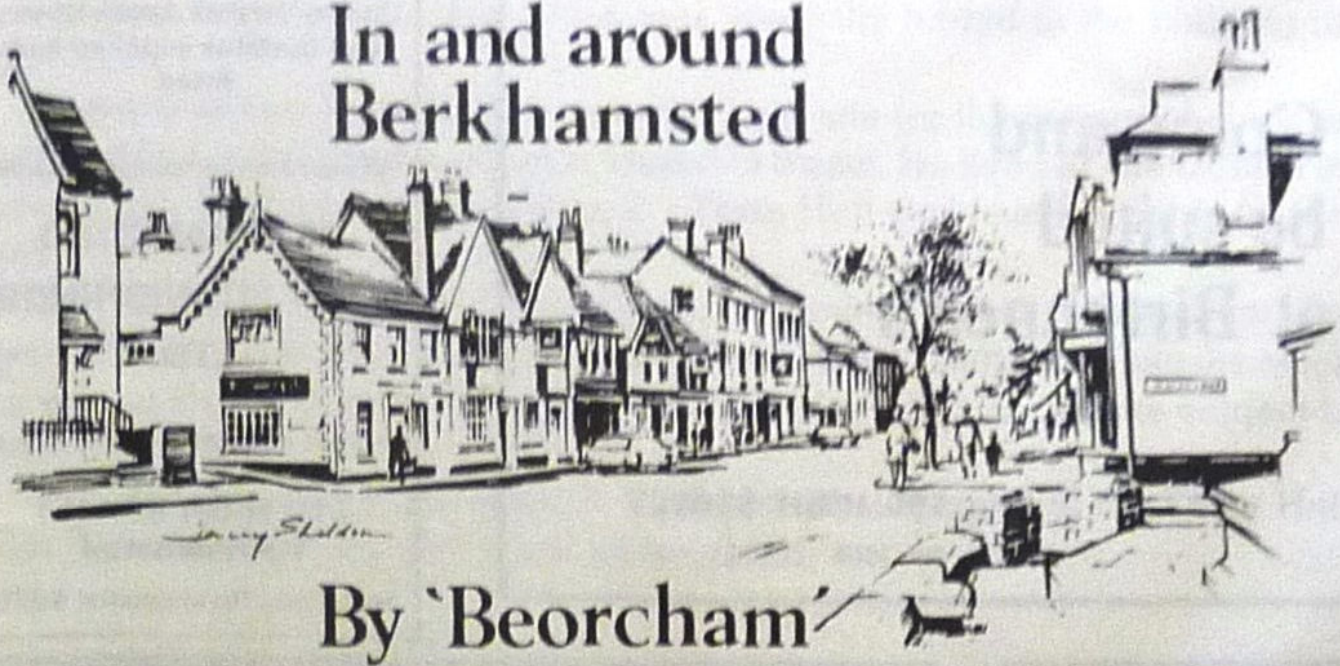


In and around Berkhamsted



By 'Beorcham'

ANOTHER DUDSWELL

Mr John Hunt, who spends much of his spare time delving into the history of his village, Dudswell, has been seeking information about a Dudswell in Quebec, Canada.

Obviously there must be a link with the English village, for the Canadian Dudswell is only a few miles from a place called Tring Junction. The two places are forty miles or so south of the city of Quebec.

In a letter headed "La Corporation Municipale de Dudswell" Mr Eldren Dawson writes: "The township of Dudswell was created on July 1, 1855. The name was in honour of a British military man of that name. The township of Dudswell, of which I am secretary/treasurer, is all rural, with dairy and beef cattle, also woodlands which supply the saw mill and the nearby paper mills. The St Francis river flows through Dudswell, and there are two lakes in the township, Silver and Mirror. A lot of people work in nearby towns, and the children are transported by us to regional schools. The population of about 850 doubles in summer. Fifty years it was mostly English, but now the majority is French."

TELLING THE TIME

How we missed the Town Hall clock when it was taken down a few weeks ago. By the time the 'Review' is published the 80 years old timepiece may be

replaced on the central gable which was specially added to the building in 1906.

There was some discussion as to the best site for the memorial clock to Thomas Read, a timber merchant in Holliday Street. He lived at The Gables in Gravel Path. No building other than the Town Hall was found suitable for the clock.

For many years a local clockmaker climbed up a ladder from the Committee Room to what was called the Clock Room. That was when the clock was wound by hand once a week or fortnight. Not a job for anyone subject to claustrophobia!

Incidentally, there are several Victorian photographs of the Town Hall taken before the gable and clock were added.

FUN AND GAMES

Recent gifts to the Local History Society include three huge posters, 4ft by 2ft, printed by F J King in Lower Kings Road 80 years ago. The oldest poster advertised the Oddfellows' grand fete and gala in the Castle grounds on August Bank Holiday, 1900.

Headed by St Peter's Band, a procession started at 1 pm from the Crown Hotel and proceeded to the Castle. At 2 o'clock there was a concert by London and Continental artistes, including Cowboy Ross and his son Harry, champion expert rifle shot of the world.

The greatest novelty must have been "the cinematograph, same as used at the Alhambra Music Hall, with upwards of 40 pictures, one of the best and most expensive shows before the public, with war scenes from the Front (the Boer War?) and all the principal officers, also the great picture 'Cinderella'." This was at least ten years before Berkhamsted had a cinema.

Other attractions were a promenade concert, a magnificent display of fireworks, dancing on the lawn, grand illumination of the grounds with colour fires, and refreshments at moderate prices. Admission prices were one shilling (5p) for an adult and sixpence for children, or 8d. and 4d. if tickets were bought before the day. The admission to the fireworks at 8 o'clock was 3d. The London and North Western Railway issued cheap tickets to Berkhamsted.

For the gifts of the posters we are indebted to Mrs Baines, of Chesham, whose son, Arnold, is a Chesham councillor and local historian. I hope that we shall not have to wait much longer for a local museum for the hundreds of local bygones which deserve a permanent display.

CHANGING NAMES

My thanks to the Rev. Malcolm Scott for the following letter: "From time to time you refer to road names of local interest, so here are a few thoughts about one from each of my two parishes.

"My own lane, Ivy House Lane, takes its name from a house now demolished but occupied by two generations of the Webster family and then known as the Hill House. It was previously called Ivy House and would at that time have been the only house in the lane apart from the Vicarage. Whatever its official name, it was always referred to as Dwight's Lane when I was a boy, from the family who farmed what is now Gutteridge Farm and then included the pheasantries which supplied the Royal estates. (The present Ivy House at the top of the lane is, of course, much more recent.) When I came here as Vicar eleven years ago a local tradesman still addressed letters through the post to St Michael's Church, Dwight's Lane.

"At the top of the lane, on the Common, there is a link with the past in the house known as Pheasantries Cottage. Once a farm worker's tied cottage, this has been expanded and modernised and was renamed ten years ago to distinguished it from another 'The Cottage' on the Common and to retain an historical link.

In Bourne End we have Sharpes Lane, which undoubtedly takes its name from the Sharp family who have lived there for a number of generations. The name is misspelt, the 'e' having crept into it at some stage. John and Vivienne Sharp live at Cress Farm in the lane, although their main activity is with the trout farm, supplied by the same artesian wells which fed the formerly thriving cress industry. Their son and daughter-in-law also live in the lane and are in partnership with them. Incidentally, Pix Farm, opposite the lane, is of considerable historical interest. It was once much larger than the present farm."

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Talking of street names, a friend recently asked if Lower King's Road was named after Richard the Second!

And have you noticed that "Berko" is creeping back in local newspapers? The posh version, of course, is "Berkeau."

AT THE CROSSROADS

Recently, at the central Crossroads, a reader was asked the way to the

railway station. He pointed the way down Lower Kings Road, and the enquirer said he was surprised that there were signs pointing to the swimming pool, car park and library, but nothing to show the way to the station.

BERKHAMSTED AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Hon. Secretary: Mr PC Birtchnell, 195 High Street, Berkhamsted. Tel. 3506

PROGRAMME: AUTUMN 1985

All meetings in the Court House at 8.00 pm.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2nd

Some Ancient Documents. Fragments of 1597 or 1598 are the earliest of some thirty documents which throw more light on life in Berkhamsted in the 17th century. Mr P R Heather, who has given several talks to our Society, has transcribed a veritable 'treasure house'.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22nd

William Ellis of Little Gaddesden was a farmer who lived in the village from 1720-59 and wrote nineteen books on agriculture and rural life. Mr Paul Stanbridge, a Redbourn farmer, will talk about his writings, life and place in history.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12th

By Special Request! Many members have asked for a repeat of the local films ('movies') which aroused great interest last winter. Many people were turned away when all seats were taken. Some rare 'stills' will add to the interest of the meeting.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11th

Members' Evening. Short talks of local interest, interrupted by refreshments.

NOTE THE DATE: The Annual General Meeting will be held in the Court House on Wednesday, January 22nd 1986.