

# BILLERICAY OBSERVER

TUESDAY APRIL 11th, 1961.

EDITOR WYNFORD GRANT. EDITION NUMBER 84. PRICE 1½d.

PHONE BILLERICAY 1927



## MUSEUM CLOSED OWING TO THEFTS

Following the theft of two pieces of Sheffield Plate, which cost "an awful amount of money", from the Cater Museum, it was decided to close the Museum to the public. Those in the building, at 74 High Street, at the time were asked to leave, and a notice was posted on the door stating that the Museum would be closed "until further notice". The "Observer" understands that the Museum will be closed for at least a month.

In an interview with the "Observer", Mr. H. Richman, Curator, said; "The two pieces - a Sheffield Plate Snuffers Tray and Snuffers, and a Sheffield Plate Candlestick - were on the sides of the period bedroom and the sitting room farthest away from the public. To get at them the thieves would have to climb through several ropes". Mr. Richman said that he thought the thefts took place on Wednesday.

The Police are looking into the latest thefts from the Museum, but there have been no developments so far.

The decision to close the Museum was made because of the large number of thefts since it opened in May, 1960. The list reads:- May, Bradbury 10/- note, overprinted for use by Egyptian Expeditionary Force, 1916. June, Blue ornament, value 2/6d. September, Cary's "Traveller's Companion", 1828, value 25/-. (Book destroyed by thief aged 16). December, Silver Watch, value £5, Silver Watch and wooden folding stand, value £6. (Second watch recovered with glass and second hand missing). Hat Pin with Cames Head, Value 7/6d. January 1961, Pepperbox Pistol, 18th Century, value £10 from padlocked case on top floor. Two magazines on guns from office. February 25th, case forced and inscribed silver tobacco box taken. Also brass box from a mantelpiece. March 9th, German Bayonet, First World War (wrenched from wall). March 18th, Tobacco or Snuff Box in the shape of a pistol, painted black, brown, and gold. (From same case as silver box, heavier screw undone by suitable tool).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.

## LONDON RD. ACCIDENT - FOUR INJURED

Four people were taken to hospital following a collision between a motor cycle and sidecar and a car at the junction of London Road, Western Road, and Tye Common Road, Billericay at lunchtime on Easter Saturday.

The car, driven by Mr. G. H. Wilson of Tye Common Road came from Billericay and turned into Tye Common Road. The motor cycle and sidecar came out of Western Road and hit the car on the offside. The car swerved on to the pavement, and crashed into a pillar box, narrowly missing a pedestrian. The motor cycle ended up in the middle of the road. The motor cyclist was uninjured, but his wife and child in the sidecar, Mr. Wilson, and his wife, were taken by ambulance to St. Andrews Hospital, Billericay. The wife and child were discharged after two hours, Mrs. Wilson was discharged later, but Mr. Wilson was detained.

The cause of the accident is not known, but a dog was seen running about in the road just before the crash occurred.

## PREPARATORY WORK ON NOAK HILL ROAD IMPROVEMENT STARTED.

Schemes for the improvement of the Noak Hill section of the B.1007 are being considered by the Ministry of Transport and preparatory work is being carried out in connection with the section of road between Church Street and Kennel Lane. Preliminary consideration is being given to major improvements on the length between Kennel Lane and the Sun Crossroads, Billericay.

STOP PRESS NEWS.



## MUSEUM THEFTS.

Continued from Page 1.

April 4th, case with Silver and China in interfered with, but nothing taken. April 4th or 5th, Sheffield Plate Snuffers Tray and Snuffers, and a Sheffield Plate candlestick. Missing from office at uncertain dates:- Essex Reviews, Nos., 11, 18, 131, 234, total value approx. 25/- "History Of A Little Town", George Walker, 8/6d. Museum closed, April 6th.

### COUNCIL TO AID SWIMMING POOL.

At a recent meeting of Basildon Council's Development & Planning Committee, the Committee heard a report from the Council Chairman, and Committee Chairman, regarding their meeting with the representatives of the Billericay Schools' Swimming Pool Committee, and it was decided to recommend that subject to the approval of the Finance Committee, the Council make a grant of £500 towards the project during the year 1961/2.

### O.A.P. MARRIAGE THIRD IN TWO YEARS IN BILLERICAY.

At the April 5th meeting of Billericay O.A.P Assn., a presentation was made to two members, who had just got married. They were Mr. R. Hill and Mrs. F. August. A cheque for £5 was handed to them by Mrs. Law M.B.E., J.P., President, from all Members of the Branch. Mrs. Law wished them many years of happy married life. She stated that this was the third occasion within the last two years when she had had the pleasant duty of presenting a Wedding Gift to couples who had been Members of the Branch, and who had married.

### "MONDAY CLUB" FORMED AT BUTTSBURY.

A meeting organised by Billericay Old Peoples Welfare Committee, at Buttsbury Primary School on March 27th resulted in the formation of what will be known as "Buttsbury Monday Club". Meetings will be held each Monday evening from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Buttsbury School. Anyone aged 50 or over will be welcome at the first meeting on April 17th, 1961, when it is hoped to start a happy gathering.

### QUIET FORTNIGHT FOR FIREMEN.

Billericay Fire Brigade have had a quiet fortnight, the only fire being a grass fire in Jacksons Lane on Good Friday. However, on Monday the 27th they had a false alarm call to a fire on the railway embankment.

## ROUND AND ABOUT by "WANDERER".

For many years a group of people worked hard to establish a Museum in Billericay. Now, since it has opened an average of two items a month have been stolen. The articles in most cases were valuable, but in some cases it appears to have been a case of stealing "for kicks" and wanton destruction. Because of the deplorable actions of a few, the public have to be deprived of the use of the Museum. There should be no need to take precautions to prevent thefts in a town like this. But it is usually very little use reasoning and arguing with these young thugs in the making, who appear to be responsible in the main for these thefts. What they do respect is the strong arm of the law, but the threat of a telling off or small fine is no deterrent. The publishing of names, heavy fines and probation, and the bringing of parents into court would prevent these incidents.

Readers will probably say "Ah, the Teenage Problem". Although their ways may seem to be a little strange, they are on the whole, a good crowd, with only a few bad ones here and there. True a problem does exist, and should be dealt with, but it has been blown up and exaggerated beyond all proportion. Also remember that all teenagers are individuals and their problems are not all the same. One sees groups of teenagers wandering around the town of an evening like lost sheep. A coffee bar might be the solution, but it could attract rowdies from round about. I think the answer is a Community Centre where clubs like the Teen & Twenty Club (see another page) could flourish. Clubs like this, run by teenagers and liked by them, should be encouraged as much as possible. A Community Centre could serve many other organisations such as O.A.P. as well.

The accident at the Western Road/Tye Common Road/London Road junction emphasises the great danger which exists there. Cars park by the Cafe despite "No Waiting" notices. There is no effective control of traffic here, and some action should be taken before there is an even more serious accident.

I am pleased to see that the Council suggest a hearing on the Norsey Woods Water Tower. This shows an improved attitude to public relations. Good! Now what about continuing in the same spirit by re-starting the old Delegate Conferences where the Public could question the Council.



## PROPOSED NORSEY WOOD WATER TOWER - COUNCIL SUGGEST PUBLIC HEARING.

At a recent meeting of Basildon Council's Development & Planning Committee the Southend Waterworks Company submitted an application for permission to build a water tower in Norsey Woods, Billericay. The proposal would contravene the development plan for the district, but the Waterworks Company had explained that the site proposed was the only possible site on which to erect the tower, and the tower itself was essential for the increased supply of water that was necessary for the town of Billericay. The proposal had been advertised and a large number of objections had been received which had been forwarded with the planning application to the County Council.

The County Council now indicated that they were prepared to approve the application, provided that the water tower was set 250ft back from the rear fences of properties in Norsey Road. The Committee decided to suggest to the County Council that in view of the very considerable public opposition to the proposal it might be wise for the Council to organise some form of Hearing or interview at which the necessity and merit of the proposal could be explained, and the objectors or their representatives given an opportunity of making their views known, and learning more about the proposal.

## BIGGER AND BETTER CARNIVAL FORECAST.

A bigger and better Carnival was forecast by Mr. A. Bryant, Chairman of Billericay Carnival Committee, at a meeting at the Rose Hall on March 29th.

The Carnival Queen contest was under way and entries were being received. The selection dance for the Queen and two attendants would be held on May 20th at the Archer Hall.

Mr. J. A. Dodd, Secretary, said that a number of local organisations had offered to man stalls and sideshows at the fete. He appealed for individuals to come forward to assist, as there were many people in the town who did not belong to any organisation, but would be willing to take charge of a sideshow or help in some other way on June 24th (Carnival Day).

Mr. D. Christian reported that the 4th Billericay Scout Group, who successfully organised a hot dog stall last year, planned to double their output this year, and sell soft drinks as well.

## "GREAT CONCERN" OVER SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION PROBLEM IN BILLERICAY.

Speaking at the first meeting of the new Education Committee for Basildon Cllr. A. P. Phelps said that there was great concern in Billericay over the school accommodation problem. Cllr. Phelps continued; "Soon the junior bulge will be catching us up, so we must consider additions to the building programme. We must consider the speed-up of new Secondary Schools, the planning of new ones, and the provision of temporary accommodation".

Mr. Manns, Education Officer, pointed out that the number leaving Secondary School, exceeded those coming from Primary School into a Secondary School.

Cllr. Phelps replied; "We are building very rapidly".

Cllr. W. H. Davies J. P., Chairman, said that the problem was becoming more serious. He pointed out that in a recent survey in the Billericay area it was found that the birth rate was twice the national average. "It is no use shouting your heads off", he continued, "this is one of the many problems you will have to tackle. Last year the Divisional Executives in Essex - the people who are supposed to know the education needs - sent estimates of £9 Million to the County Council. They cut them to £4½ Million, and the Minister of Education lopped off another 2 Million to bring the final amount to £2½ Million 25% of the original estimates".

Mr. Manns stated that a tender had been accepted for the extensions to Buttsbury Primary School, and the new Mayflower County Secondary, scheduled for the 1961/2 programme, and providing 600 places, was on the drawing board. The school is to be built off Stock Road.

It was reported that the Scheme of Divisional Administration had not finally been agreed on, but with the consent of the Ministry of Education, County Council, and S. E. Essex Divisional Executive it had been agreed to operate on an informal basis until one or two outstanding matters had been agreed on.

Mr. Manns reported on services in the Urban District - approximately 4½ million school meals were served a year, and there were about 16,000 children on the roll.

It was decided to have a tour of local schools, so that members could become acquainted with the various problems that existed.

Cllr. W. H. Davies J. P. was elected Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. C. J. Gadson, Vice-Chairman.



## EDITOR'S NOTES.

Circulation this time is 550. It has been decided that all "Observers" will be 10 pages in size.

Sales outside the Station in last two months - 6..21..42 ..70.

Letters again on Page 8. I hope that this trend will continue.

----- The Editor.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

CLIFF RICHARD AND MISS M.V. WOODGATE TO JUDGE "OBSERVER" COMPETITION.

Cliff Richard, the pop singer, and Miss M.V. Woodgate, the novelist, in conjunction with the Editor of the "Billericay Observer", W.P. Grant, are to judge the "Billericay Observer MYSTERY Story Award, 1961". This competition will be open to "Observer" readers aged 11 to 19, and entrants will be required to write a Mystery Story. There will be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd money prizes. For entry form, rules, and details see the next issue of the "Billericay Observer".

## THE DEATH OF MRS. C. EALES.

Mrs. C. Eales, aged 90, died of a stroke at the Jane Marie Rest Home, Hanningfield, last Wednesday morning. Mrs. Eales lived in Billericay from when she was 17, until just after the death of her husband Mr. Fred Eales known as "Mr. Billericay", a few years ago. He was Billericay's last Saddler & Harness Maker, and conducted his business from their home at 74, High Street, now the Cater Museum.

## HOLIDAYS

SOUTH DEVON COAST, LADRAM BAY -----

4 BERTH MODERN CARAVAN TO LET, 2 MINS. SEA, JUNE, JULY, OR B.B., EVENING MEAL AT OWNERS HOME. PARTICULARS - BLACK, 12, DUKES ROAD, BUDLEIGH-SALTERTON, DEVON.

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THE BILLERICAY WOMEN'S CO-OP GUILD  
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Also FREE Chicken Manure. Clean 1/2 CWT  
Bags supplied at 3d. Please collect.  
"Mossbank", Woodside Road, Perry Street,  
Billericay.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Forthcoming Events In Billericay.

Thursday April 13th, Council Meeting,  
6.50 p.m., Council Chamber, High Street,  
Billericay not at Basildon.  
Sunday April 16th, Tyelands Riding Club  
Hunter Trials, Park Hill Wood,  
Herongate.

## WOMEN'S CO-OP GUILD.

At their meeting on March  
27th the Guild read and discussed  
correspondence on the Easter march  
from Wethersfield to London, Pensions,  
and the increase in welfare milk  
charges. The significance of the Guild's  
emblem "The Woman With The Basket" was  
enlarged upon. Future plans were made  
for speakers and a Jumble Sale.



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BILLERICAY O.A.P.'s.

29th March.

A Minute's Silence was held on the passing of one of the older members, Mrs. J. Clarke. Sick members were all wished a speedy recovery. Mr. Ramage and Mrs. F. Gray were about the same. Mr. Hall was not at all well. Mrs. Stanton was welcomed back to the meeting after absence through illness. The Secretary informed members that he had heard from Mrs. Walledge, who was staying in Cambridge, that she would not be returning to the Branch, as she was leaving Billericay. He also stated that the week's holiday at Yarmouth was fully booked. Entertainment was given by Cicely Wardle's Concert Party.

5th April.

Sick members were wished a very speedy recovery. Mr. Ramage was about the same, Mr. Hall and Mrs. F. Gray were a little better. Mrs. Darling had had a fall. It was Quarterly Meeting Day, when members could air their grievances or views, any suggestions being put before the Committee for discussion. Members entertained themselves; Mrs. Newell, Mr. Joseph, Mr. Speller, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Newell taking part. Tea hostesses were Mesdames Whitworth, Clark, and Prince, for both meetings. For a report of the presentation to Mr. R. Hill and Mrs. August for their wedding see special story elsewhere in the paper.

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CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.

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Services:- Sunday 15th April, Matins, 9.30 a.m. Sunday 22nd April, Holy Communion, 9.30 a.m.  
Young Wives Fellowship:- April 11th, 8 p.m., Talk. April 25th, 2.15 p.m., Bring & Buy Sale. Proceeds for Charity.

GOODSPEEDS.

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LOCAL NEWS SERVICE, DESPITE RISING  
COSTS. IF YOU ARE IN A HURRY THE  
"OBSERVER" GIVES YOU ALL THE LOCAL  
NEWS TOGETHER, SO NO SEARCHING IS  
NEEDED. WITH COMPETITIONS AND THE  
RETURN OF THE HISTORY ARTICLES THE  
DEMAND WILL INCREASE, SO BUY EARLY!



"SPORTS OBSERVER".

BILLERICAY TOWN THREATENED WITH  
RELEGATION - AND THEY MUST FIND £135  
BEFORE AUGUST 1st.

When last Saturday week Billericay Town Sports Club lost 0-11 to Old Chelmsfordians, they fell to second from bottom, in the Chelmsford & Mid-Essex League, Premier Division and are threatened with relegation. On Saturday they beat Burnham Ramblers 6-1 at home, but their fate depends on their showing in their home and away matches with Little Waltham, one place above them in the League.

The Reserves are in even worse trouble. Second from bottom in the Second Division, after defeats 2-3 by Ongar Res. and 1-2 by Great Baddow Res. they have two hard matches against Roxwell Res. and Ingatestone Res., which they have to win to be certain of avoiding relegation.

As revealed in the last "Observer" the Club is in grave financial difficulties. They must have £135 before August if they are to play next season - these are the bare necessities. They are spending only £40 on their new Pavilion, the rest going on new kit and administration. They will hold no Dinner & Dance this year, because of the loss, but they have plans for a Fete and other fund-raising events.

They want to carry on, but new officials to back the present ones up, and more supporters are badly needed. The future of the Club and football in Billericay hinges on the A.G.M. on May 4th. Anyone interested in helping out phone Mr. Jee, Secretary, at Wickford 2630.

--- The Editor.

THE "OBSERVER" CINEMA GUIDE -- RITZ  
CINEMA, CHAPEL STREET, BILLERICAY.

Monday April 10th, 6 Days, Walt Disney's  
"SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON" (U) (Now  
showing in West End). Full supporting  
programme.

Monday April 17th, 3 Days, Rod Taylor,  
Alan Young, in "THE TIME MACHINE", (A).  
Also "RICH, YOUNG, AND DEADLY" (A).

Thursday April 20th, 3 Days, Anne  
Heywood in "CARTHAGE IN FLAMES" (U).  
Also "CHARTROOSE CABOOSE" (U).

Sundays:- April 16th, Anthony Steel in  
"PASSAGE HOME", (A). April 23rd, James  
Stewart in "THE FAR COUNTRY", (U).

BUTTSBURY A.G.M.

At the A.G.M. of Buttsbury Residents' Association at Buttsbury School on 27th March it was reported that there was a paid-up membership of 260. The financial position was "fairly satisfactory". A motion was passed changing the subscription from 2/6d to 3/6d for two.

In his report Mr. H.E. Wilkins, Secretary, reported on activities during the year regarding the train service, accommodation at Buttsbury School, Station Footpath, and the Bus Service. Regarding the question of a Buttsbury Community Centre he said that 58 organisations had been circularised and it was hoped to hold a meeting to form a Community Association in April.

Officers elected:- Mr. Cook, Chairman, Mr. Sitton, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Clarke, Treasurer, Mr. Blair, Secretary.

BUS SERVICE EXTENDED.

The Route 256 Billericay Town Bus Service has been extended to Billericay Station from its Perry Street terminus. Service is half-hourly in both directions, but on new timings.

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25/27 HIGH STREET  
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OFFERS AVAILABLE UNTIL 29th APRIL.

SMEDLEYS FRUIT SALAD, 16 oz. -----	SAVE 4d, REDUCED FROM 2/- to 1/8d.
NESTLES CREAM, 6 oz. -----	SAVE 3d, REDUCED FROM 1/6d to 1/3d.
FREARS TEATIME ASSORTED, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. -----	SAVE 3d, REDUCED FROM 1/4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 1/1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
ROBERTSONS GOLDEN SHRED, 1 lb, -----	SAVE 3d, REDUCED FROM 1/6d to 1/3d.
UNOX PORT LUNCHEON MEAT, 12 oz. -----	SAVE 4d, REDUCED FROM 2/8d to 2/4d.
C & B CREAM OF TOMATO SOUP -----	SAVE 3d, REDUCED FROM 1/3d to 1/-.
H.P. BAKED BEANS, 8 oz. -----	SAVE 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, REDUCED FROM 8d to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
MACDONALDS CHOCOLATE TEA CAKES -----	SAVE 2d, REDUCED FROM 1/- to 10d.
KRAFT DE LUXE CHEESE SLICES, 8 oz. -----	SAVE 4d, REDUCED FROM 2/3d to 1/11d.
SPAR INSTANT COFFEE, 2 oz. -----	SAVE 2d, REDUCED FROM 2/- to 1/10d.
SPAR JELLIES -----	SAVE 2d, REDUCED FROM 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
MANSION "GUARDSHINE" POLISH -----	SAVE 4d, REDUCED FROM 1/6d to 1/2d.
PARAZONE BLEACH -----	SAVE 2d, REDUCED FROM 1/5d to 1/3d.
1001 CLEANSER -----	SAVE 7d, REDUCED FROM 2/6d to 1/11d.
BRILLO PADS (inc. tax) -----	SAVE 4d, REDUCED FROM 1/3d to 11d.
LIFEGUARD DISINFECTANT 12oz -----	SAVE 8d, REDUCED FROM 2/1d to 1/5d.
COOPER'S "FRESHFAIRE" 5oz. -----	SAVE 9d, REDUCED FROM 3/9d to 3/-.
ANDREX TOILET ROLLS (DOUBLE PACK) -----	SAVE 7d, REDUCED FROM 2/4d to 1/9d.
18x2 rolls, PINK -----	" " " "
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" " YELLOW -----	" " " "
" " GREEN -----	" " " "
" " 36x2 rolls, WHITE -----	" " " "



### THROUGH THE POST.

Letters from "Observer" readers.

Dear Sir,

As a keen supporter of Billericay Town Football Club for very many years may I, through your very valuable columns, reply to Mr. Jee.

Up to three years ago the "Town" played excellent football, so much so, that I used to follow them in their away matches, often being the "lone" supporter, with a handbell to cheer them on. In the 30's no team could touch them, and I wonder how many "locals", remember the cup final at Romford - what a game! Many times in recent months the "Town" could not field a team. It seems that with the departure of the "old-uns" interest has waned. Other "interests" have been a deciding factor, and the Committee were not always without blame. The records to date are deplorable, it is true, but surely Billericay people could do better than this? It seems so unreal that out of all the local lads a town cannot field a football team to uphold the traditions of the past. Tom Kennedy, a stalwart player in his day, young McMorland, and others - what a team they would make today. I sincerely hope that we can do something about it, and if I could help I would be only too pleased. I have loved the game, since I was a boy and still do, and no one would be more pleased to see the "Town" once again on its feet. Come on lads, what about it? - W.J. Tucker, School Road, Billericay.

### CYCLING ON FOOTPATHS.

Dear Sir,

I read with interest the letter from a reader in the last issue about cycling on Long Meadow Path. This should most certainly be stopped, as I have already been knocked into by bicycles five times, on two occasions my shopping being strewn about the footpath. Sooner or later somebody will get badly hurt. - Pedestrian and Cyclist.

### NORSEY WOODS

Dear Sir,

All residents of Billericay must watch developments regarding the future of Norsey Woods, or we shall find this beauty spot swallowed up by houses. This must be Green Belt, or all the country round here will disappear - "Watchful".

### TEENAGERS LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATION FOR CLUB.

A club run by teenagers for teenagers is looking for somewhere to hold its meetings.

Founded last May, Billericay Teen & Twenty Club first held its meetings at South Green Memorial Hall. Then because the hall was too expensive, the club held its meetings at the Co-op Hall on Tuesday Evening. It catered for teenagers aged 13 onwards, and had a membership of 70 to 80, with attendances of up to 100 from time to time. Facilities for Table Tennis were provided and the Club bought a record player. Dances were organised and plans made for holding the club on two nights a week. Members came from all parts of Billericay. Admission was 1/6d for Over 15's and 1/- for 13 to 15 year olds.

Then one day towards the end of last year the doors of the Co-op Hall were locked on the teenagers. The reason the Co-op gave was damage to the hall, but Miss Marden Secretary of the Club says that she can prove that the damage was not caused by members of her club. Most of the teenagers seen wandering around the town of an evening are members of the club, and she felt that if new accommodation could be found the Club would be able to keep these youngsters off the streets. Any offers?

### CHICKEN MAN'S APPEAL TURNED DOWN.

An appeal by Mr. A.C. Clarke of "Wynfall", Noak Hill Road, Billericay, asking the Minister of Housing & Local Government to remove conditions imposed by the Council on a poultry house at his home has been rejected. The conditions state that the building must be demolished and the ground returned to its former state by the end of 1962.

At the Inquiry it was stated that there was some confusion on the part of the Council regarding the erection of the poultry house, and Mr. Clarke was informed that he could go ahead. When the Council were informed of the size of the building they gave only limited permission, in order that Mr. Clarke could recoup some of his expenditure on the building.

In his report the Inspector stated that if this had been an ordinary application, he would not have allowed it, as a building of this size was out of keeping with a row of private houses. However in view of the expenditure incurred by Mr. Clarke after he had made inquiries, he supported the limited permission. The Minister agreed.



# "THE WOOLPACK"

HIGH STREET, BILLERICAY, ESSEX (Rear of Church).

For

WOOL (Reserved), SIRDAR, WENDY, LEE TARGET, PATON & BALDWINS, EMU, MUNROSPUN, PENGUIN, HAYFIELD, VYSYLKA, TEMPLETONS, LADYSHIP, POODLE etc. Unbranded from 1/- per oz.

HABERDASHERY - Sylkos, trimmings, lace, ribbons, elastic, hair grips, nets, slides, rick-rack etc.

DRESSMAKERS' ACCESSORIES - Zipps, Vogue and Practical patterns, vilene, buckram, buttons, belts, backing, petersham, webbing, press fasteners. Needles and oil in stock.

Vyella, Clydella, and Dayella in stock.

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# BILLERICAY IN THE PAST by W.P.G. 2nd Series.

## NO.1 - OLD BILLERICAY AND TRANSPORT.

The oldest road through Billericay is that which comes from Tilbury, across Langdon Hills, through Billericay, and on to Chelmsford - known today as the B1007. This old hill route existed before the time of the Romans, and when they came to Tilbury, they used this route and established a military station at Billericay. It was this road that gave Billericay a great deal of its importance in the Middle Ages, for pilgrims from the north travelling to Canterbury used it, and stopped overnight at Billericay, thus creating a great amount of trade for the shopkeepers and innkeepers, and causing the erection of a Chapel in Billericay.

Another road that was of some importance in its day, but has long since disappeared is the road from Billericay to Maldon. Bishop Cedd had his headquarters at Tilbury, Maldon, and Bradwell, so Billericay saw a lot of the comings and goings of the old Bishops and their followers, and no doubt they used the old road. This road is mentioned in a deed of the 14th. Century, and although it is hundreds of years since it fell into disuse a close examination of local maps does show signs of what may have been the site of the old road. It seems possible that it went by way of the "Preaching Cross" - in Goatsmoor Lane -, along the edge of the now enclosed Ramsden Back Common, where before the War was a wide straight track, now overgrown and neglected. A continuation of this track is still usable and forms part of the boundary of Bishop's Wood, leading eventually to a footpath behind Whitelilies Farm, and so into Mill Road. Until the construction of the Reservoir this footpath continued in a direct line to the Hanningfields, and from there it is still possible to trace portions of roads and other paths in an almost straight line to Maldon.

Another road that has fallen into disuse is (H) Apsindon Lane, which ran from Coxes Farm Road to the Southend Road at Whites Bridge, although this was in use in the 16th Century. When one went to Wickford in those days one went by Outwood Common Road, Coxes Farm Road, and Apsindon Lane. All that is left today is a short spur from Coxes Farm Road, and a track to Gurnards Farm which it passed by. For today people use the Mill Road to Whites Bridge road, which did not exist in those days.

Getting from place to place in Winter was no easy task, with deep ruts and muddy roads. Often towns like Billericay were isolated during the Winter, and so in the Autumn all the local farmers would kill their animals, salt them, and sell them at the old Billericay Market or one of the Fairs.

Conditions did not improve until the turnpikes introduced, whereby all people using the road had to pay a sum for its upkeep. There were four in the Billericay area - one at the Kings Head, South Green, one opposite Hill House, Stock Road, one by the Football Field, and one towards Hutton.

Then the gentry began to have their own coaches - for example the famous Spitty Coach in Colchester Castle Museum, a familiar sight in the Billericay of the last century. Stage coach services were introduced - "The Dispatch", which ran from Aldgate (dep. 2.45 p.m.) daily except Sundays to Rochford, calling at the Crown, Billericay. There were others as well - there is mention of "Thorogoods Coach calling at the Horseshoes (now the Three Horseshoes) at 8 in Summer and 9 in Winter", and a service between Tilbury and Chelmsford is also referred to in old records.

The last of these coaches stopped running when the railways came to Billericay in 1889. Before this there had been an attempt to build a canal from Battlesbridge on the River Crouch to Billericay, but it never got further than the digging of the canal heads in the meadows below Chapel Street. In the Middle Ages the local rivers were navigable further than they are now - the Crouch as far as Wickford, and the Marfleet at Langdon Hills - and they carried many goods to and from Billericay, avoiding transport by the dreadful roads as much as possible. Even in the turnpike days they were bad - we hear of seven people in the Billericay Coach being terribly maimed when it overturned at Romford. Arthur Young described the road from Billericay to Tilbury as one of the worse in the kingdom. However, in 1890 the High Street and in the 1920's the buses came to Billericay, and Bulls Taxis ("Motors Open & Closed"), now Mr. Collier's business.