TORIES ACCUSE INDEPENDENT VOTES PROBABLY DISHONESTLY GAINED

A 3-page leaflet, written by T. W. Thomas, Chairman of Billericay Conservative Branch, and distributed in small areas of Billericay, on the Council Election in May, comes to the conclusion that "some R.A. votes were probably won somewhat dishonestly". Speaking to the "Observer" Clr. Wilkins, the Independent Residents' Councillor, who had a majority of 600 over his Conservative opponent (Mr. W. H. Davies J.P.) in the Council Elections dismissed the whole leaflet as "absolute rubbish".

Referring to vote catching tactics the leaflet reads: "There were some vote catching tactics tried on election day which were not strictly honest." For instance, R.A. cars toured South Green and Great Burstead saying 'Don't let the Council take away your children's recreation ground'. Fine stuff for whipping up a vote and difficult to refute on the spot.

What is the truth? I gather it stemmed from a rumour that the green at South Green was to be built on. The R.A. made the most of what was only a rumour, without apparently checking it. Had they done so they would have found that the blackest-hearted Council couldn't do so even if they wanted to, as it is a designated open space. Further that the removal of the swings etc. was forced upon the Council by a strongly worded recommendation from the Road Safety Committee since the green is flanked by busy roads which children have to cross to get to it and once there, can and do rush through the hedge on to the roads in their games. They could be blamed for ignoring Road Safety recommendations, but hardly for accepting them. So some R.A. votes were probably won somewhat dishonestly".

Mr. Thomas states that his thoughts on the election "are worried thoughts of course, because of the possible ramifications - long term and short term, local and national, of the outcome of the election". Regarding the result he states; "I don't think there is much doubt that a lot of Conservatives voted for Mr. Wilkins". Referring to criticisms of the Council Mr. Thomas says; "I doubt if there is a Council or Government in the world which has not got its critics. It's very easy to criticise when one does not know the problems and difficulties".

Mr. Thomas claims that only one-tenth of Council work has to be judged politically, and that the Socialists introduced politics into local government. "In this particular area", he says, "it is Labour's aim to flood the division with Labour voting council estates, so as to make it a safe area of left control locally and nationally".

Regarding the purchase of Great Cowbridge Grange the leaflet reads; "You may remember that recently the Labour Party pressed for the purchase of 227 acres of land off London Road and this was supported by Clr. Wilkins in the Council and Mr. Cox (R.A. Chairman) outside - although the Labour Party said openly that it would not be green belt for ever, and they would then be able to use it for a large Council estate. It is estimated that the land would take over 2,000 houses. The R.A. wanted it as "open space", but it is Labour who are likely to be in control of the Council in future and not the R.A."
R.A. SLOGAN "ATTRACTIVE NONSENSE".

From Page 1.
The leaflet continues; "That apart, how can anyone who is sufficiently conscious of affairs as to stand for election, personally be without politics. The difference between the philosophies of right and left are now so wide that few people can have failed to develop fairly marked leanings one way or the other; and when a politically controversial matter is on a Council agenda the minds of those who stood as Independent must be coloured by their own personal politics. So when it comes to it, his vote will be every bit as "political" as the others.

No, I really think that the whole matter of "Keeping Politics out of Local Government" is attractive nonsense and no more, and repeat that anti-Socialists are well advised to support a candidate who is honest enough to declare his allegiance and can be relied upon not to lose a vote decision at the wrong moment".

The leaflet goes on to consider the effects of the result on the Residents' Association. "Have they spiked their own guns?" the leaflet asks. "Personally, I would be sorry to see an emancipated R.A. because well directed and constructive criticism is a good thing", states Mr. Thomas, "and I think it possible that some body they may live to regret the outcome of May 13th, 1961, and we in Billericy may do so too if we lose a useful watchdog thereby."

The leaflet then turns to the long-term effects of the result; "The major determinant of our lives is not at Saeilid, but at Westminster. The really worrying thing is that we may see in Billericy such a spread of R.A.ism that the Conservative Association gets seriously weakened and submerged by the R.A. movement."

Summing up Mr. Thomas states; "I think this word of warning is called for. To all Conservatives and Anti-Socialists, I would ask you not to let local irritations obscure the larger and longer term considerations. The entry of the R.A. into local politics looks harmless enough at the moment, while there is an adequate Conservative majority locally, and no General Election in prospect nationally. But while wishing a "non-electoral" R.A. well, I think that - and all Anti-Socialists who support them at elections - are playing with fire in a bigger context.

Continued In Next Column.

INDEPENDENT ANSWERS TORY ACCUSATIONS.

From Previous Column.

I would ask you to continue to support the Conservative Association in order that the way is not left open for Labour to overtake us, locally and nationally, while we squabble and play with words and so weaken our ability to resist".

Mr. Thomas continues to pay tribute to the work on the Council of Mr. W.R. Davies J.P., who lost his seat to Cllr. Wilkins. He ends; "I now appeal to the R.A. to consider soberly what may result from their actions and to all Conservative R.A. supporters not to leave an old love for a new".

Commenting on the leaflet, Cllr. Wilkins told the "Observer"; "I think that the Conservatives are rather worried about the situation as there are two vacancies next May. The way people feel, the things that have gone on, and the opportunities that have been missed, I think that they will want things more carefully looked into. We set the tone of the election and we went out of our way to conduct it in a properly acquisitely fair manner. Davies and his own election Agent went round in a loudspeaker van saying; "A vote for Wilkins is a vote for Labour"; and there were subsequently several complaints to the Agent. Also, unlike the Conservatives, we did not try posting. Since I've been on the Council I've been accused of being a Tory by the Socialists and a Socialist by the Tories. I vote how I think - politics doesn't come into it - I judge each item on its merits. The Tories and Socialists have secret meetings to predetermine their policy. All over the country there is a trend towards Independents. For years Hornchurch Council was dominated by party politics, but in the last four years 9 R.A. members have been elected. People have seen the efforts of the R.A. over five years. People are most concerned about what happens to the town, they pay a great deal of money for their houses on a mortgage, and are committed to stay here for twenty years. It is not a question of politics at all. There is a lot to be said for old and new and we must try and compromise between the two, and we must look to the future.

We had an opportunity to buy Great Cowbridge Grange for £33,000. We are urgently short of open space. This was the sort of opportunity you get once in 50 years. Will we ever get another?"
SANDPITS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME.

During the past few weeks special machinery has been carrying out soil tests on the old sandpits, opposite Billericay Station, in connection with a proposed development scheme. The tests have revealed that the soil is mainly shifting, wet sand.

The "Observer" understands that the scheme provides for a 50 yards block of two-storey terraced houses parallel with the backs of gardens in Cromwell Avenue, a single storey block of flats running parallel with the backs of gardens in Stock Road, a further single storey block of flats running parallel with Long Meadow Path, and a five-storey block of flats running from the back of the terraced block to Radford Way (the Industrial Estate Road). The "Observer" also understands that the plans have been considered by the Planning Committee of Basildon Council, and have met with a favourable reception.

Among the suggestions advanced for the use of the site in the past, are a Bus Station, and a new Fire Station. The "Observer" understands that the land has recently changed hands, and that the former owner is leaving the district.

NEW STATION BOOKING HALL OPENED.

Billericay Station's new booking hall, booking office, and parcels reception office were opened to the public last Sunday week. The new booking hall is airy and spacious, and the latest automatic ticket issuing machines are installed in the booking office. The floor is of "non-slip" rubber tiles of an attractive design. A new wide stairway from the "down" platform ensures speedy access to and from the booking hall.

The old gas lighting has been replaced by electric lighting. Central heating has been installed throughout the station, and furniture and decorations in the waiting rooms have been renovated. The staff rooms have been improved, and new toilet facilities have been installed. A rope parcels lift on the "up" platform has been in use for some time.

Work yet to be carried out includes the erection of a new cycle store on the site of the cattle pens, and the erection of a new stall for Smiths, further along the "up" platform, constructed of brick and flush with the platform wall. It is also intended to seal off part of the yards Approach for additional car parking facilities.

ADDITIONS TO MUSEUM COLLECTION.

Among the many recent additions to the collection of Billericay's Cater Museum are some of the fragments of pottery and glass found during work on the enclosed reservoir in Norsey Road by Mr. S.K. Leonard. They are thought to have come from an old brick kiln.

The constant flow of material received by the Museum means frequent slight changes in the display so that everything has its fair share of showing time. To meet the growing lack of space two old bedroom cupboards are being converted into extra show cases. In one are displayed the Tercentenary Plates from Billericay in U.S.A., and Jubilee and Coronation glass and china from Queen Victoria to the present reign. In the other is displayed another recent addition, a child's sewing machine, age about 75 years.

On the suggestion of the Junior Section of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and with the practical assistance of the "Billericay Observer", a further link with America has been forged, and copies of the "Billericay News" will be received regularly at the Cater Museum, where they will be studied on application to the Curator. Copies of the "Billericay Observer" are sent to Billericay.

Pieces of medieval pottery from Barn Hall, Wickford, have recently been presented, and a lady in Chantry Way, Billericay, found further fragments of 15th/16th century slipware pottery, part of the same vessel whose fragments were dug up in the garden a year ago. It is still incomplete but the finder is still hoping to find further portions.

Another addition is a Victorian Sewing Table, which, after slight repairs will go in the collection sitting room.

Among the new coins received are one of Allusia 223/226 A.D., minted at Colchester, and a Warley Camp halfpenny, dated 1794.

The Museum is now open from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Saturdays, and from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays.

STAFF NEWS.
SPRIELLA RESIDENT CORSETIERE
Mrs. W. Lennon
"Danwyn", Beaufort Road, Billericay.
Phone Billericay 1827.
Made-to-measure Fashion Foundations
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By advice on your corsetry problems is
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ORDER YOUR CYRL LORD CARPETS AND
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Mr. A. Baker, 69, Knightbridge Walk.
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Phone Billericay 1634.
Call, Write, or Phone.
Will fit if required.

LIVE WELL!
1st Year Hens will Roast or Boil!
Only 2/6d per lb.
Cheaper than Sausages!
Prepared for the Oven Free!
Also ——— Rabbits for Pets
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Apply: "Moss Bank", Woodside Road,
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(Between Queens Park and School).

GOOD SPEEDS.
1, Chapel Street.
(Opposite War Memorial).
Established 35 years.
Expert Fish Fryer.
Smoked Haddock a Speciality.
Frozen Foods Stocked.
Open on Fridays and Saturdays
until 9.0 p.m.
Phone Billericay 280.

CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.
Services: Sundays at 9.30 a.m.
1st & 3rd Holy Communion, others
Family Matins.
Young Wives Fellowship: September
5th, 8 p.m., General Discussion on
Holidays.

ADVERTISEMENT RATES from the Editor.
FOR THE OLD FOLK!

Billericay C.A.P. - 2nd August Meeting.

On sick members it was stated that Mr. Ramage, Mrs. Shiner, and Mrs. Parkin were all improving; Mr. Fegg, Mrs. Gray, and Mr. Shaw were about the same; Mr. Youngman was a little better. The highlight of the afternoon was the presentation by Mrs. Law of a parcel of groceries from the Branch to Mr & Mrs. A. Wiltshire on the occasion of their Golden Wedding. Gifts were also received from Mrs. Law (President), the Editor of the "Billericay Observer", and several members of the Branch. The Chairman and Secretary both paid tribute to the couple's hard work with the Branch.

Mr. Wiltshire is in the Concert Party and runs the Raffle each week, assisted by Mrs. Wiltshire. Entertainment was provided by Mr. Frank Sawyer's Concert Party from Leigh.

Billericay C.A.P. - 9th August Meeting.

99 were present. The Secretary stated that he had received notification from the Federation of C.A.P.'s regarding their rally at the Westminster Hall, and he asked if any members were interested. He also asked if any members were interested in some petition forms he had received from the Federation. It was decided to hold a further outing in September to Dovercourt. Entertainment was by "The Serenaders" Concert Party.

Billericay C.A.P. - 16th August Meeting.

One minute's silence was observed in memory of Mr. Shaw, a member who had recently passed away. On sick members it was stated that Mr. Ramage was improving; Mrs. Parkin, Mr. Youngman, Mrs. Gray, and Mr. Fegg were all about the same; Mrs. O. Smith had fallen down and sprained her thigh. The afternoon's entertainment was provided by the Branch's Concert Party.

Billericay C.A.P. - 23rd August Meeting.

100 were present. On sick members it was stated that Mr. Ramage was improving, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Parkin, Mr. Fegg and Mr. Youngman were about the same, Mr. & Mrs. Sadler were very ill, and Mrs. O. Smith was improving. All were wished a speedy recovery. The Secretary stated that there were still some seats left for the outing to Dovercourt on Monday September 4th. Entertainment was by Bob Currie of B.B.C. fame, and his sister Dorothy.

Bottesbury Monday Club.

The meeting on the 21st August was held in Christ Church, Perry Street. A collection of coloured slides, showing Canada and New York, were projected by Mr. G. Williams. The slides were supplied and explained by a member, Mrs. Parries. Mrs. Wilson, another member, gave a short talk on her life in India. A very successful raffle was held.

WILLIAM J. MASH C.M.B.H.I.

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THE "OBSERVER" CINEMA GUIDE.
Ritz Cinema, Chapel St., Billericay.
Monday August 28th: - All week.
An early attraction: Walt Disney's amusing cartoon film "ONE HUNDRED AND ONE DALMATIANS" (U).
Special matinees on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday, doors open at 2.15 p.m.
Supporting "GUNFIGHT AT SANDOVEL" (U).

Monday September 4th: - (3 Days)
"THE MIRACLE" (U) and "LAWS versus GANGSTER" (U).

Thursday September 7th: - (3 Days)
"THE 3 WORLDS OF GULLIVER" (U) and "7 WAYS TO SUNDOWN" (U).

CLASSIFIED ADS.

Hairdressing.

26) EXPERT HAIR TRIMMING IN YOUR OWN HOME. - Please phone for appointment, Billericay 228.

Forthcoming Event.

27) WILLCOUGHBY FARM RIDING SCHOOL.
PONY GYMKHANA. Sunday September 10th at 2 p.m., Coxes Farm Road, Billericay. Entry by programme.

Nursery School.

28) New Nursery School, opening September, Archers Hall Annex, children 3-5 years. 9.15 to 12.15. Further details from Miss Ryan, 40, Hillside Road, Billericay. Phone Billericay 1174.

"Billericay Observer" Classified Advertisements give value! Only 6d. for the first thirty words, and 3d. for each further twenty words up to 130 words. Phone your advert to Billericay 1927.

"SPORTS OBSERVER".

During the close season Billericay Town Sports Club have, with the aid of a £50 grant from the Essex Playing Fields Association, raised enough money for them to play this season. They have also fitted out their new pavilion with the "bare necessities" - hot water, partition curtaining, a sink, two stoves etc. They have also managed to find enough money to purchase one set of shirts, but they have had to repair and patch up the goal nets with what ever they could find.

At the end of the last disastrous season the first team were relegated from the Premier Division of the Chelmsford & Mid-Essex League to the 1st Division, and the Reserves were relegated from the 2nd to the 3rd division of the same league.

However, this season twelve new players have joined the club, and the future looks quite bright!

Last Saturday week the first team played a friendly trial game against Pitsea United, which they lost 3-1, at Pitsea. During the match the players were switched around, and the Secretary, Mr. Jee, informs me that there is some good talent, although the club are short of wing-halves.

On Saturday the Reserves were due to play Witham Youth Centre at home, but Witham failed to turn up, so a six-a-side game was played.

BILLERICAY CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

To decide, one must know! Free film show about the effects of the Bomb.
Thursday 14th September, 8.0 p.m., at the Friends Meeting House, Bell Hill. (adv.)

MATTHEWS
25/27 HIGH STREET
FOR
A WIDE RANGE OF
CONFECTIONERY
TOBACCO - CIGARETTES
"NEILSONS" ICE CREAM

Page 6.
QUEENS PARK STORES
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Queens Park Stores also offer the following goods at reduced prices:-

KRAFT MARGARINE ------------------------ SAVE 3d REDUCED FROM 2/3d per lb to 2/- per lb.
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You know that when you shop at a Spar shop you will receive personal
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AND REMEMBER YOU CAN ALSO BUY AT QUEENS PARK STORES:-

CIGARETTES
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CHEMISTS SUNDRIES
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The Mystery Of Mill Hill Wood.

by the Editor.

For many years local historians have puzzled over the reason why the large wood stretching behind Perry Street should be known as "Mill Hill Wood". Nowhere was there any documentary reference to a mill, nowhere was there any trace of one, nobody remembered one. Yet the wood was called by the same name on the earliest maps, and as one traced it back it grows in size. It is a definite hill, but the origin of the "mill" in the name was a matter of conjecture.

One theory which gained some support was that the ponds in the copse opposite the "Observer" offices were of artificial construction (and indeed they may well have been) and were the ponds of the legendary mill. There has always been a copse, and at one time Mill Hill Wood may have extended over the land where the "Observer" offices now are, joining up with the copse, and only interrupted by the mere cart track (by present day standards) that was Perry Street.

The mystery deepened when examining an Ordnance Survey map of 1843 recently the Curator of the Castle Museum discovered a hitherto unknown mill shown near Great Blunts Farm, which is off the Stock Road, and not far as the crow flies from Mill Hill Wood.

In an attempt to solve the mystery once and for all I decided to examine records and maps at the Essex Records Office. In not one of the tithe maps, tithe rolls, maps, books, or deeds I exhaustively searched was a mill at Great Blunts mentioned. The mystery deepened.

Then in a book on winemills I found a mention of a mill in 1295 at Battsbury (Chelmsford). However, this could have been the Stock Mill, for Stock was in Battsbury Parish at the time, and there was no separate mention of a Stock Mill.

When last in 1851 a book on Essex place names I found a clue to the mystery. "Mill Hill Wood", it stated, "probably derived from the Mill of Wluesdon (1259 Ass.) Wolvensbrigge (1351 Works)."

The "Ass." referred to assize records and the "Works" to another book. The "brigge" in "Wolvensbrigge" referred to a bridge and "Wolvens" was obviously derived from "Wluesdon".

Continued In Next Column.

The passage in "works" read; "Presentment in Michaelmas term, 1351, at Chelmsford that Robert Bacon, knight, is bound to repair Wolvenden Brigge between Mountnessing and Battsbury by reason of four acres of meadow called Wolvensbrigge" belonging to the manor of Bacos, and that the bridge is broken. Precept to the Sherrif. On Tuesday 22nd November the said Robert came before the king in person at Chelmsford and acknowledged that he was bound to repair the said bridge and that it was broken. He was therefore in mercy and the Sherrif was ordered to restrain and to return on the octave of Hilary". (The original Latin and translation are printed in the book).

On examining some old maps I found that an old road (now just a short spur) ran straight from Bacos towards Battsbury, and crossed the river before crossing the Battsbury-Billericay road. It should be remembered that Battsbury was a village of some importance at this time, and not just a Church and a few farms as now. Also it was possible to see Mill Hill Wood quite clearly from there, and the hill may have been towards Bierserby.

On careful study of several maps it appears that the bridge and road finally fell into disuse about 1800, and the footbridge which replaced the old bridge, sometime in the last forty years.

I then proceeded to examine the site of the bridge. I found that the sides of the river were banked for some way on each side, and old pillars and stones could be seen. This definitely established the existence of a bridge, and finally moulded my theory on "Mill Hill".

It is obvious that there never has been a call for a mill on "Mill Hill" - there just never have been enough people to justify it. But there have been at Battsbury. I am of the opinion that the Mill of Wluesdon was a water mill for two reasons:-

a) The presence of "don" indicating a river in the name - the first part is anybody's guess.

b) The ample water supply. The fact that it could be seen from the hill gave it its name.

I also discovered that the mill was connected with Richard le Blund of Gyrge Laundry (Great Blunts), and I think that when the mill fell into disuse the owners of St Blunts made an unsuccessful attempt to build a mill there - hence the map. But the site of the old mill is still unknown.
THE WOOLPACK
3, CHAPPL STREET, BILLERICAY.
(Rear of Church).
Phone Billericay 1757
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WOOL (Reserved), SIRDAIR, MARY MAXIM'S, CANADIAN WOOLS, LEE TARGET, FAMOUS
FLEETKNIT AND POODLE, WENDY'S FASHION FLECKS AND WISP, COBLEY'S ORLON,
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63, HIGH STREET, BILLERICAY. Tel.73.
Owing to the Chancellor's surcharge
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ROBERT PORTERS BOTTLED GUINNESS
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Cheapest in the district at
1/2½d per ½-pint, 2/5d per pint, 4/4d per quart.

Page 9.
ROUND AND ABOUT
by "WANDERER".

The action of the local Conservative Branch Chairman in issuing a leaflet throwing mud at a Billericay Councillor is absolutely deplorable. Never has such an action been taken before by a losing side in a Council election in this Urban District.

The leaflet criticises the statement of the R.A. car-touring South Green, regarding the recreation ground. I consider it to be justified, as without the equipment its use for children was considerably reduced. In addition the R.A. had a plan for fencing the ground.

Mr. Thomas says; "They could be blamed for ignoring Road Safety recommendations..." The Council could also be blamed for ignoring the wishes of the overwhelming majority of local people over Billericay Industrial Estate. Only in that case the number of objections approached 1,000, instead of a Committee.

The Conservatives went round saying; "A vote for Wilkins is a vote for Labour". What a load of rubbish! How could a vote for one candidate be a vote for another?

Politics should not come into local government. At the moment practically all the Socialist proposals are rejected by the Tory majority. Apparently, the Tories do not credit the Socialists with the ability to make useful suggestions. I am not saying that all the suggestions put forward by Socialists are good ones - far from it. But when they do come up with a good idea, it is often rejected, simply because the Socialists suggested it. This is wrong. How can politics come into Planning, Sewerage, Private Street Works etc. etc.

The Conservatives seem to be worried that "R.A.ism" will undermine their chances in the next General Election. There have been R.A. Councillors at Hornchurch for four years, with no effect on other elections. Anyway, surely the good and the future of the town is far more important than one's own party political beliefs. When the next General Election is held people will vote how they feel on national issues. Next year they will vote on local issues, and the two Councillors elected will obviously be the most popular choices. It was the same this year. Anyway, I am certain very few will take any notice of the rubbishy Tory attack on an elected local Councillor ---- "Wanderer".

"NO SMELL" SAYS WADSWORTH.

Billericay Residents' Assn. have been informed by Mr. S. Wadsworth, Engineer & Surveyor of Basildon Urban District Council, that there is no smell from the Mountnessing Road Sewage Work. This, he states, is born out by a letter he has received from a resident in Mountnessing Road.

A petition, signed by 85 people in March, and various individual protests, together with a letter from the Billericay Residents' Assn. have yet to be considered by the Works Committee of the Council.

BRING & BUY STALL.

A Bring & Buy Stall organised by the 4th Billericay Boy Scouts Group by the Church last Saturday week resulted in the sum of £25-16-0 being raised towards the new headquarters fund.

SPECIAL PARKING ARRANGEMENTS ADEQUATE AT LAKE MEADOWS.

Even on August Bank Holiday Sunday and Monday the special Car Park for Lake Meadows in Radford Way and Radford Crescent was not full up, although at one time an estimated 500 cars were parked. At all other times the space has proved to be adequate.

Last year, on occasions, nearly 4,000 cars parked in Lake Meadows. However, this year many were turned away by the restrictions on parking. A few parked on grass verges in Stock Road, but others drove off elsewhere. Commented one driver; "We want to drive right in and stay by the car". Nevertheless the park was packed full, and queues formed for refreshments and boating.

LION LANE RESIDENTS ASSURED.

Basildon Council have assured frontagers of Lion Lane and Wakefield Avenue, Billericay, that although it is the Council's aim to make up all private streets eventually, they will not make up the two roads for at least five years. Frontagers wanted to carry out their own improvements to the roads.

Too Late To Classify.

29) COLLECT NOW! Pure potash
½ ozt bags 2/- or 6 bags 10/-. Apply "Mosbank", Woodside Road, Perry Street, Billericay (Between Stores and School),

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