

P B H S S

February 1976

Free

POTTERS BAR AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OBJECTS: The society was formed in 1959 to encourage the preservation of things of local historical interest and to study both local and general historical matters. Efforts are also being made to encourage members to take an active interest in archaeological matters in order to have a team of diggers available when required.

MEETINGS: Regular meetings are held during the autumn, winter and spring months; usually at Mountgrace Lower School, The Walk, Potters Bar. Details of membership and the future programme may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. Harding, 83 Byng Drive; Tel. Potters Bar 52973.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: These are the lifeblood of any society and ours, in spite of inflation, is still (at the time of going to press) at the remarkably low level of 50p. for those under 21 years old and 25p. for those under. Non-members of the society are welcome to attend meetings free of charge, though we hope that they will like us sufficiently well to join us.

NEWSLETTER: This, at the moment, is an irregular publication which appears once or twice per year and is issued free to members. It publishes items of local historical interest, Society news, mentions and reviews new books and other matters likely to be of interest to our members. Its appearance is dependant on a supply of material suitable for publication and welcomes contributions whether from members of the Society or not. Older peoples' memories of the past may grow dim but they are forgotten altogether if they are not recorded. May we have yours? Tell us what you remember in your own words; we will write it up for you.

FUTURE PROGRAMME:

Friday, 12th. March - Children's Books - a talk by Ron. Bayman.

Tuesday, 20th. March - Annual General Meeting followed by
"Local History" - a talk by Brian Warren.

Wednesday, 12th. May - "I've Come About The Drains" a talk on
Roman Baths by Tony Rook.

PUBLICATIONS: Readers will know that for some time now it has been the aim of this Society to publish separately important matters of local historical value. This is about to be realised and the first two volumes will be published during the next few months. The first of these will be "Memorial Inscriptions, St. John's Church, Potters Bar High Street" which has been compiled by Betty Fost. The publication date of this is imminent. The second volume will cover the 17th. Century rentals of Wullyotts Manor and will include a reference map; the authors are Helen Baker and Brian Warren. Another map, of larger format, for use with this volume will be published simultaneously but separately.

H. A. C. CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Hertfordshire Archeological Council will be held at the Mid Herts College, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City on Saturday 27th. March. Tickets may be obtained in advance from Mr. A. G. Rook, 23 Mill Lane, Welwyn; Telephone Welwyn 5300. At the time of going to press details of the programme, times and admission charges are not available.

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BOOK REVIEW

If you have room on a coffee-table and £6.75 to spend you could do worse than to invest it in a copy of "The Book of Hertford", written by Cyril Heath and published by Barracuda Books Ltd. Sumptuously produced, it achieves its generous layout by means of large uncrowded illustrations and short paragraphs. These give an illusion, perhaps, that one is getting more than one is; but they make for easy browsing, which appears to be the aim.

Mr. Heath is not able to go into anything in depth, but what he says appears to be accurate. (I would question only the firm attribution of Hertford to Jane Austen's 'Meryton' : this is surely no more than an interesting suggestion).

The portraits of England's monarchs could have been spared - even though they had connections with Hertford Castle - to make room for many more telling illustrations that, I feel, could have been found. But most of those that are represented were well worth including - early photographs of vanished streets, modern ones of parterres, blow-ups of details from Speed's plan of the town and unfamiliar prints of it. Among these, pride of place is rightly given to Rowlandson's drawing of the market-place, the original of which hangs in the museum: this appears on the eye-catching dust cover in colour, though only in black and white and on a smaller scale in the book itself.

Although it is not a book that breaks new ground, every reader of it will find some information new to him or her. Of small importance but of interest, for instance, is the fact that the Hertford gallows that hung Thurtell is the one now displayed in the scene in Madame Tussaud's. It is interesting, too, to read that the long-standing rivalry between Hertford and Ware was still leading to pitched battles within living memory; will it, I wonder, now lead to the publication of "The Book of Ware"?

M. Tomkins.

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All opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Potters Bar and District Historical Society either as a body or as individual members.

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