

## **IT HAPPENED IN 1936 TURNING BACK THE BOROUGH PAGES**

C.T. January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1937

THE year that has just died provided us nationally with plenty of sensation, the changes in our Royal house being its outstanding feature, living under three kings we have seen history in the making.

We have fluctuated towards war and away from it, and all the year, whilst we have observed happenings in the borough, there have been mutterings and rumblings of wars; indeed it is only because we are war-shy by virtue of bitter experience that national nerves have not snapped beneath the strain of 1936.

Faced with his record the dead year has not been one of worthy note, and yet it is unkind to speak ill of the dead, so looking more closely at home, we find that our own domestic affairs of the Borough of Christchurch are distinctly more cheering.

"The Borough Advances" and "How the Borough Grows," are two phrases that have cropped up throughout the twelve months. We have as a community escaped a great danger by stemming back the lamentable outbreak of a devastating fever and have taken at long last the initial steps to make our charming homeland healthy as well as attractive by the installation of the Highcliffe drainage.

This last is the most notable achievement of 1936 and a most considered one, for it ensures that the safety of the health of the burgesses shall in future not be assailed by risks that need not apply to settlements of to-day.

Re-rating problems have torn us with dissention, but as a borough in this respect we are in the grip of fell circumstance, and the fact that in terms of population the borough continues to increase in size somewhat discountenances the suggestion that in final rateable value we shall lose as a consequence. Propose what form of slaughter you may, one always finds lambs ready to submit to the process of sacrifice, additionally the majority have submissively shrugged their shoulders, whilst only a few are preparing for departure. The population figures record a steady and continuous increase, and our Borough Surveyor has said that if this proceeds at no greater ratio we shall within five years, more than double our proportions.

Our Town Councillors have displayed a lively interest and awareness of the importance of Town Planning, with a judicious admixture of advancement and retention of original charm, a really beautiful borough should emerge in the near future.

Certainly it is that Highcliffe and Walkford are finding greater favour with the most desirable class of resident as a selected location in which to spend days of happy and comfortable retirement, and with reasonable care, a township of great importance is now in the making.

The process of interlocking of interests with our neighbour Bournemouth proceeds amicably and along the expected course, despite small and mutually irritating differences; the fact that these are all overcome almost as they arise is a surety that our Councils work along the right lines.

The happenings of the past year indicate that the borough will have to maintain steady and unremitting care to retain its individuality, for the superior claims of Bournemouth, by reason of its size and importance, have naturally a tendency to overshadow our own.

### **A SPIRIT OF THE PRIORY.**

The year opened with a cheerful note of gay scenes of seasonal festivity and jollity. Mesdames Barberski and Tuckerovski, ballerina dancers extraordinary, appearing for one night only at the King's Arms Hotel.

Another seasonal note was the alleged spirit photograph taken inside the Priory Church. This picture, first published in the "Christchurch Times," aroused great interest and was subsequently copied in journals all over the world.

## THE HENGISTBURY HEAD GROUYNE.

The Bournemouth Town Council first discussed the £19,000 scheme to combat the erosion problem early in January.

The scandal of the door-to-door so-called charities were attacked in this journal, an action which led finally to their extinction.

In our issue of January 11th, Mr. (then Councillor Derham) drew attention to the serious position of Mudeford Beach; much as Major Bellairs does in this present issue.

The appointment of the Rev. H. E. Lewin to Burton, was announced, and the departure of the Rev. R. H. W. Roberts for Guildford detailed.

On Jan. 7th and 8th the Highcliffe Amateurs presented "Murder on the Second Floor" most successfully.

### "KEEP DOWN THE RATES."

Councillor D. Lane opened at the Christchurch Town Council meeting on Thursday, Jan. 16th, a long overdue attack on the Winchester County Council spendthrifts.

The funeral of Mr. Joseph Henry Vick, who had passed his 86th year, took place on Jan. 12th.

Mr. H. E. Kemp was elected chairman of the Highcliffe Conservative Association, succeeding Mrs. R. O. Fordham.

## DEATH OF KING GEORGE THE FIFTH.

It became the sad duty of this journal as recorder of national and local happenings, to record on Jan. 20th, the death of King George the Fifth, a greatly beloved monarch. The Mayor of Christchurch (Alderman D. Galton) addressed a telegram of sympathy to King Edward VIII, and later read the Royal Proclamation of Accession from the outside balcony of the Town Hall.

On Tuesday, Jan. 28th, a United Memorial Service was held in the Priory Church to render prayerful homage to King George V., attended by burgesses of all creeds and denominations.

The death occurred on Feb. 3rd of Mr. Arthur Brown, one of the borough's oldest traders.

On Saturday, Feb. 8th, the wedding took place of Mr. A. G. Head, Assistant Town Clerk, to Miss Doris Newman.

On February 10th, the death occurred of Mr. Chas. E. King, the licensee of the White Hart Hotel.

The Christchurch and New Forest Canine Society held their first annual dinner on Friday, Feb. 21st, fifty guests being present, including the Mayor and Mayoress.

## A WELL PLANNED CHRISTCHURCH.

Under the auspices of the Chamber of Trade, Alderman A. T. Pike, of Bournemouth, delivered, on March 4th, a most interesting address to a large assembly at the Town Hall, in which he pleaded with the City Fathers of Christchurch to preserve the ancient beauty and splendour of the town and district, and not to dissipate the charms of the countryside as Bournemouth had done.

## DOOR-TO-DOOR "CHARITIES" PACK UP.

As a result of this journal's determined attitude, the closing down of the unwanted door-to-door "charity" collectors was announced on March 7th.

A steeple jack was seen at work on the Congregational Church during the week of March the 14th.

The Town Council introduced at their March meeting the regulations that subletting of beach huts shall be confined to fees not exceeding £1 per week.

#### PETER'S BOWL.

On March 25th, Captain Bryant, Chief Officer of the Christchurch Fire Brigade, on their behalf, was presented with "Peter's Bowl," at the Holborn Restaurant, London; an award made by the National Fire Brigades Association for raising the largest contribution towards the association's Widows and Orphans Fund.

#### DEATH OF COUNCILLOR WRIGLEY.

With painful unexpectedness, the death of Councillor Ellis Wrigley, of Highcliffe, created a profound sensation on Thursday, March 26th.

Wednesday, April 8th, saw the exit of the last tram from the borough, and the entry of the first trolley bus, the occasion being made a civic ceremony of the two boroughs.

#### CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 276 YEARS OLD.

On Wednesday, April 22nd, the Christchurch Congregational Church held its anniversary celebrations. Alderman Percy Bright said: "In Bournemouth we consider 50 years a long time. One hundred years ago was the beginning of our history, and as for one hundred and fifty years ago, well that was before our time. Yet here in Christchurch you have a Congregational Church which already had an active life of 276 years."

#### ST. GEORGE'S DAY PARADE.

Three hundred Boy Scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies assembled in the Priory Church on the occasion of the annual St. George's Day Service.

On Wednesday, April 29th, over 300 members of the Girl Guides from the Avon Valley movement were present at the first Handicraft Exhibition.

#### DEATH OF COUNCILLOR W. H. LUDLAM.

On Saturday, May 9th, Highcliffe sustained the loss of another of its Councillors, in the passing of Mr. William Henry Ludlam. Thus within a few weeks the borough suffered the loss of two of its most zealous public workers, for Councillor Wrigley and Councillor Ludlam were long associated in Town Council work.

On Sunday, May 10th, Mrs. Elma Matthew, the devoted wife of the Vicar of Hinton, the Rev. H. L. Matthew, died suddenly.

#### ROGATIONTIDE PROCESSION.

A Rogationtide Procession took place on Sunday, May 24th. It was organised by the Rev. George Bunn, of St. George's Church, Jumpers.

#### EMPIRE DAY.

Empire Day was observed by the borough in the parade and open-air service at Christchurch Quay on Sunday, 24th May, in which British Legion Branches of the district, public bodies and many local residents participated.

The Christchurch Fire Brigade carried off the challenge cup for the best aggregate of points

at the annual competitions of the Southern National Fire Brigades Association on Monday, June 1st.

#### DEATH OF MR. W. F. L. TOTTENHAM

By the death of Mr. William Frederick Loftus Tottenham, of Staple Cross, Burton, Christchurch lost a respected and well-loved resident. He died on the 29th May at his home.

The Christchurch and New Forest Canine Society held their first open-air members show in the new gardens of the King's Arms Hotel, on June 3rd.

A total of 215 entries in 25 classes with a total of 90 dogs shown, gave to the show the maximum interest, and both the quality and quantity of the entries constituted a record.

#### TOWN COUNCIL BREEZE.

At a Town Council meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup>, Councillor F. D. Lane was over-ruled with an "omnes" cry of order upon a somewhat "breezy" objection to the continued appointment of officials.

"You are simply being nose-led by the officials, and you haven't the guts to stand up against it," he told the Aldermen and Councillors, adding: "There's a lot going on in secret to the detriment of the ratepayers."

June 19<sup>th</sup>.— Election for two Councillors. Mr. A. V. Ridout headed the poll with 341 votes, Mr. Harry Preston followed him with 314, whilst Mr. Nunneley recorded 182.

#### THE RE-ASSESSMENT TANGLE.

In the issue of July 4th this journal published a frank and open statement of the Rating and Valuation Committee through their representative, Mr. W. F. Larn (Rating Officer) dispelling the confusion which had arisen from the re-rating situation.

It was slated that re-assessments of properties was not a voluntary action of the Borough Council, but a legal obligation imposed upon them by the Rating and Valuation Act of 1925.

On Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, the Highcliffe and District Horticultural Society held their first conference. This was a meeting of both professional and amateur gardeners of the county.

The story of how the Priory Church grew into its magnificence was told on July 14th and 15th beneath its mellowed walls, in the form of a Priory Pageant.

The cordial relationship existing between squire and tenant was strikingly evident at Hinton Court on 16th July, when Sir George and Lady Meyrick joined with the tenants and employees to celebrate in the old-fashioned way the coming of age of their son, Mr. G. D. Meyrick.

#### ALDERMAN ACCEPTS HOME OFFICE APPOINTMENT.

It was learned with regret in the third week of July that Alderman Miss M. B. Robinson was to leave Christchurch. She had been invited by the Home Office to take up an appointment as a prison visitor and worker in London.

#### ELIZABETHAN CARNIVAL QUEEN.

The Carnival, held on the 5th August, presented a Tudor picture, when a stately Carnival Queen, Miss Rene Burry, and her courtiers, rode through the borough streets in Elizabethan attire.

#### TYPHOID SCARE.

The trouble in connection with an out-break of typhoid which occurred in the neighbouring boroughs reached our borders, but there it was stemmed.

On Aug. 22nd this journal despatched the following telegram to the "Daily Express," London, in connection with an alarmist poster, stating that Christchurch was suffering from a typhoid epidemic.

"The News Editor, Daily Express, London,—Your journal to-day eclipses all previous efforts in sensationalism by stating typhoid epidemic in Christchurch. Absolute nonsense. The burgesses of Christchurch record their disgust at your failure to make proper investigation before publication.

W. Forder, Editor, Christchurch Times."

#### NEW BALLROOM OPENS.

Opening of the King's Arms banqueting hall and ballroom took place on Sept. 3rd. Two hundred guests assembled at the invitation of Mr. S. G. Barber (manager) on behalf of the P.R.H.A.

#### TIDYING UP THE TOWN.

At the Town Council of Sept. 17th, a final effort to demolish Pit and Spicer Street was made, and it was decided to approach the Ministry of Health to have this area, by reason of its disrepair and sanitary defects, defined a Clearance Act.

The Mayor of Christchurch opened the first Christchurch Trades Exhibition, organised by the Chamber of Trade, under the enthusiastic leadership of Mr. E. W. Mayner (president) on October 9th, lasting to the 10th.

Councillor Douglas Galton received a double honour at the Council meeting of Oct. 16th, when he was elected an Alderman and nominated Coronation Mayor by the Mayoral Selection Committee.

Air raid precautions were discussed by the newly-formed Christchurch Committee at the Town Hall, Christchurch, on 26th Sept.

#### APATHETIC ELECTION.

Municipal Election on Nov. 2nd brought back Commander, Pawley and introduced Mr. L. J. Stevens. Labour failed.

#### BOROUGH BEAUTY SPOT THREATENED.

At the Town Council on Nov. 11th, astounding proposals were made by members of the Council to widen Bure Lane.

The proposition was made by Councillor Shave as chairman of the Highways Committee. The death of Mr. Henry Hewitt, the Corporation Mace Bearer, was reported on Nov. 10th. Bad weather reduced Poppy Day collections by £12 15s. 9d. £136 11s. 0d. were the total receipts.

Christchurch Canine Society staged a record show for the district on Nov. 25th.

"Castlemain," at a By-Election, won his Council seat by one vote. The contest figures were: Pyrke 354, Mayner 353.

#### NATIONAL CRISIS.

With deep and genuine sorrow this borough heard of the King's decision to abdicate. The ceremony of proclaiming George VI. was carried out in the Town Hall.

Thus with a note of national sadness the year closed.