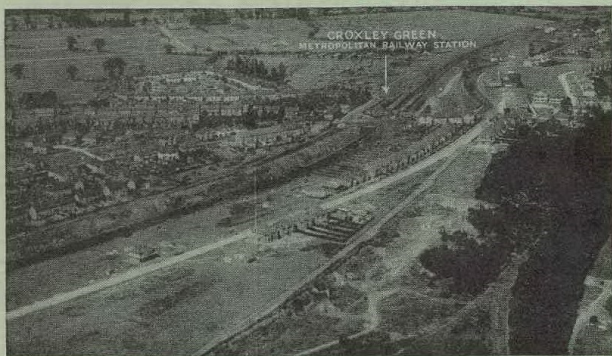


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Historic Facts of Croxley Green

By R. W. INNOCENT.

Croxley Green seems to have been a settlement of some sort since early times, but its history until almost modern times is practically unknown. If that old sarsen stone by the Church Hall could speak, it might tell of mighty doings in the past, or (what is more interesting) of ordinary doings of ordinary people who lived near it. But it remains silent, and so we are driven to search about among scanty records, and to consult Cussans and Clutterbuck, the county historians, and the Victoria History of the Counties of England. Unfortunately they do not tell us very much of the early history of the place.

There is a reference to a certain Richard de Croxley in the records of St. Albans Abbey, I believe. He was a man who held a knight's fee of the Abbey of St. Albans in 1166, and another mention of Richard de Croxley (perhaps the same man, or his son) occurs in 1210. I have not seen the actual record, so cannot say how Croxley is spelt. In the Red Book of the Exchequer Croxley is mentioned as Crokesleya and this spelling occurs frequently until 1280, along with various spellings Crokeslege and Crokesleye. There is a reference to Crokesleigrene in 1349, and this spelling seems to have been in vogue till 1396. In 1556 Croxley is called Croxleyhall meade, but by 1750 this had become Crosley Green. This spelling was retained apparently until about 1820.

In "The Place Names of Hertfordshire," published by the English Place Name Society, the derivation of Croxley is given thus, "Croc's clearing," though Cussans says that the family of Creke or Croke held a manor here of the Cellarer of the Abbey of St. Albans. He says that this family gave its name to the village. Actually, of course, the Saxon Crox may have been the ancestor of the mediaeval Crokes. Chenies and Latimer were given their names by families of the same names who were local landowners.

We cannot, I think, flatter ourselves that primitive man honoured Croxley with his presence except perhaps on his hunting expeditions. Until Roman times at least the valleys of the Thames and its tributaries were heavily forested and the haunt of bears and wolves. Primitive man did not dwell here, as he preferred the shelter of caves in which to make his permanent home. It seems that as man learned to use stone tools he became a dweller on the downlands and hills. It is interesting to note, too, that as men became skilled in the knowledge and use of metals they seem to have lived chiefly on the hills, as, for example, at Maiden Castle in Dorset. In every county in the British Isles almost there are stone-circles, Cromlechs, standing stones, tumuli, camps and other signs of habitation, and these are almost without exception on high ground, as on Dartmoor, in the Chilterns, on the Cotswolds, in Wales, Derbyshire and in Scotland.

But like King Charles's head the Croxley stone comes in

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again. It is as I have said, a Sarsen, and one of the circles at Stonehenge is composed of Sarsens. The late Alfred Watkins of Shrewsbury made a special study of similar stones in the counties Shropshire, Radnor and Herefordshire, and his conclusion was that they marked important junctions of trackways. He also found a number of place names with "Scot" in them frequently near trackways. Our stone is not far from the brow of Scots Hill.

Personally, I am of the opinion that the Croxley stone marks the junction of two trackways. One of these, I believe, kept to the high ground on the Copthorne side of the Chess, through Micklefield Green and on to the Sarratt Camp overlooking Belsize before going on to Bovingdon and Berkhamsted Castle, which like many castles rose on much earlier earthworks. Continuing South-South-Eastwards, this track seems to have crossed the Colne and gone on to Eastcote and Northolt to cross the Thames in the region of Brentford (where Cæsar is said to have crossed the river).

The other part of the "Cross" may have been a trackway coming out of the marshy Colne Valley (an almost impassable swamp in Winter from Park Street to Uxbridge within living memory). Watkins had an idea that the "Scot" part of the name in "Scotland's End," "Scots Hill" and so on had something to do with fire. (A garden-bonfire in Gloucestershire is still a "scoutch"-fire.) Certainly some sort of beacon would be essential to travellers crossing such a marsh if they were to find their way at all. Perhaps that beacon was at the top of Scots Hill.

In a way it is a pity that we cannot say definitely very much about the past history of Croxley Green. Yet the very fact that so little is known about the place adds zest to the pursuit of knowledge about it. Perhaps one day we shall be in a position to know a little more definitely the place of Croxley Green in history as more research with local records is carried on, or perhaps a chance discovery of ancient remains in field or garden will lead to more exact knowledge of other folk who lived at Croxley Green.

R. W. INNOCENT.

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(Answer to problem on page 2)

A witness cannot take any benefit under a Will. The same applies to husband or wife of a witness who also is not entitled to take any benefit under a Will. The fact that he was appointed sole executor did not invalidate the bequest.

If you make a Will bear this important point in mind.

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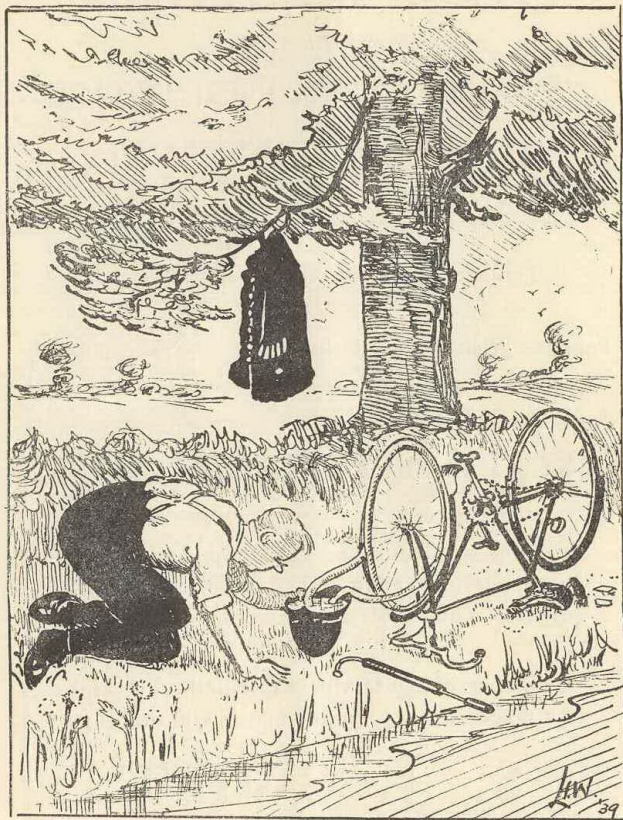
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“—THEN THERE WAS ONE!”

The Chairman's Letter

THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS.—Let me, on behalf of your Committee, thank those who worked so hard and those who voted for our nominees at the recent Council elections. The record poll and the overwhelming vote of confidence have proved to the Committee that its efforts during the past months and the programme briefly outlined for the future have the support of Croxley Green as a whole.

Whatever others who have gathered an entirely wrong conception of the thought and wishes of Croxley may say, the policy of the Association in uniting *all* Croxley Green residents is a good one. The encouragement of parochialism and local patriotism—at least until we have given Croxley its right place in Urban District affairs—will, we are convinced, be beneficial to the whole. We would assure the older residents of Croxley Green that none of the Committee or elected Councillors looks upon the result as a victory for the new over the old. We feel that the vote was the expression of dissatisfaction, not with the Councillors who lost their seats but with the treatment of Croxley by the Rickmansworth U.D.C. as a whole. The Council realises that to many of us Croxley Green is our dormitory, but they have made a mistake in thinking that we are always asleep.

A grave responsibility has been given to our nominees, but we are sure that Councillors Cooper and Whittall will keep guard over our interests to the best of their ability. They are keeping in close touch with us.

MEMBERSHIP.—We have enrolled another 100 members, making our membership approximately 500, as a result of the first few weeks of our mass-campaign. Members of the Committee are, house by house and road by road, covering the whole of Croxley. Are we too optimistic in aiming to reach a 1,000 membership? If our present members will speak to others about their Association and the "Argus," we feel confident that we shall succeed. There are many things we shall be able to do on the Social-side when we have finished our canvass. However, our main object is to speak with the voice of 1,000 when we find it necessary to speak.

OUR SECOND YEAR commenced on July 1st and subscriptions of two shillings are due from those members who have not recently joined. We have no hesitation in asking for a renewal of membership, as we are confident that the establishment of the Association as a *permanent* thing is in itself "value for the money." The service we have rendered the ratepayers as a whole in impressing upon the Council—rather forcibly at times perhaps but nevertheless efficiently—that Croxley Green is alive is one that could only be given by an Association such as ours. We have by no means achieved total success in all that we have taken up, nor have we exhausted the many items which should

be adjusted. There is much still to be done, and our future success will depend upon the support we can attract. Please send your subscriptions either direct to our Acting Treasurer—Mr. F. C. Tollit of 160, Baldwins Lane—or to any of the Committee members whose addresses are given at the beginning of this magazine.

OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held in September, details and the Balance Sheet will be sent to all *paid* members.

OPEN FORUM.—It is our hope that readers will express their views in this magazine—pointedly and briefly—and the policy of the Association will thus be adjusted from time to time to keep in step with the wishes of Croxley Green. Individual opinions in themselves do not necessarily indicate public opinion, but a steady stream of letters expressing views will enable us to judge what our members are thinking. Your letter may not be published but it will be brought before the Committee for their consideration. Please remember that this is your Association and your views—or your apathy—will influence the Committee.

THE CROXLEY TRADERS.—We have established contact with the Croxley Traders, and, after full discussion with some of their representatives, we hope to be able to assist in the encouragement of "Croxcley Shopping." We shall send you further details at a later date, but in the meantime may we suggest to those who at present do all their shopping elsewhere that you give the Croxley Traders a trial. It is not entirely their fault that there is no Croxley shopping centre; this is but one of the results of the bad town-planning of Rickmansworth U.D.C. Watford's shopping has grown with the town, but Rickmansworth and District shopping is still in almost the same state of non-development as before the increase in residential buildings. The purchasers are therefore drawn to the one and not the other in spite of the distance.

There are, however, sufficient shops—though spread about—to serve all our needs, and it but requires the co-operation of the shopkeepers and the shoppers to establish shopping in Croxley. The local tradesmen in many cases can give you quicker service, and we feel sure that if you will but give them the hope of better trade they will grasp the opportunity, increase the variety and extent of their stocks, and mutually benefit themselves and you. We cannot expect them to stock their shops satisfactorily when our purchases are small and spasmodic.

Those who advertise in our magazine have made its issue a possibility—they have already rendered us a service therefore, and we hope that when we are able to work out a scheme to prepare for "more and better shopping in Croxley" the residents will do their part.

N. P. PARROTT.

Quinquennial Revaluation

By COUNCILLOR W. H. PRICE (Secretary, North Watford Ratepayers' Association).

Two long words. Two unattractive words. Perhaps that is why the significance they have recently acquired has been overlooked by so many hundreds of thousands of rate-payers.

But put them into more everyday language and they now mean "INCREASED PAYMENTS BY RATEPAYERS."

In pursuance of the Rating and Valuation Act of 1925, rating authorities throughout the country are preparing new valuation lists for your property, to operate in 1941.

These new lists will increase your assessments.

That is a sweeping forecast into the future, but I make it without reference to cards, a crystal, or any other paraphernalia of the professional prophet.

The Minister of Health has instructed rating authorities to make new valuation lists, basing the assessments on the formula contained in the Act, which lays it down that the gross value of a dwelling house (whether it be owner occupied, controlled, a Council house, or a house let in the ordinary way) is to be the ANNUAL EXCLUSIVE RENTAL VALUE if such house were rented in an open market. In case you doubt whether this formula would be actually put into operation—having in mind present-day rents—let me remind you that the Central Valuation Committee (which is a body set up by the Minister to ensure that assessments throughout the country are uniform) has informed rating authorities that "abnormal" or "famine" rents do not now exist and valuations are, therefore, to be made in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Further, legal decisions have been given that the actual rent produced (or produceable) must be the basis on which assessments are to be fixed.

Let a hypothetical case show the dangers ahead of you:

A house rated to-day at £25 nett, say £32 gross, is letting at anything from £1 to £1 5s. per week, exclusive of rates. Assume the half-way figure of £1 2s. 6d.

The new assessment value of that house becomes 52 x £1 2s. 6d. = £58 10s. gross and £46 nett.

This gives an increased assessment of 84%.

I agree that your local authority only needs a certain sum of money per annum to carry out their municipal duties but if, knowing that, you imagine your rate poundage will be brought down so that you pay no more money in rates to-morrow than you do to-day, I must disillusion you. Based on the definite fact that whilst *your* assessment might increase by 84%, in the

next street the increase might be 50%, in a third street 40% and in another 100%, it will be impossible for an authority to reduce its rate poundage by a percentage that will leave everyone paying no more than they pay to-day. Someone will pay more rates and it might easily be you. The lower your present assessment as compared with the rental figure assessment, the greater your chance—amounting to certainty—that you will pay more.

Even if you persuade yourself that you will not be called upon to pay more rates, you are not entirely out of the wood because of the following:

1. If you pay Property Tax (Schedule A payments) an increased assessment will mean that you will be called upon to pay more in Income Tax, as it is the general custom of the Inland Revenue Department to take the assessment figure as the annual value of your property so far as Income Tax is concerned.

If you escape Income Tax now, but your assessment is increased by another £25 to £30 per annum, will you escape paying it then?

2. With properties assessed higher, the rateable value "per head" of population throughout the County will increase, and that fact will reduce the amount of money the County Council receives from the Government in the form of a "block" grant. The County authorities will then have either to curtail their services or ask local authorities for more money. If more money is wanted, you help to provide it.

3. Water rates are based on your rateable value, and there is no safeguard under the Act to prevent you from being asked by the Water Company to pay more. What happens to-day when your assessment is increased because you add a garage? The Water Company continues to charge you on the higher figure, notwithstanding that you are not entitled to use domestic water to clean your car unless you pay a special charge for that purpose.

It is impossible in this short article to go into further details on such a very involved subject, but the moral of what I have written is this. If you are not perturbed at the thought of paying more for exactly the same as you receive now—then don't worry. If you are perturbed—DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

This is not a question that affects Croyley or Watford only. It is a national question, and all over the country petitions are being organised to the Minister of Health protesting against the hardships which will result from the new valuation lists if a change is not made in the "gross value" formula.

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The Secretary's Report

SOFTER WATER.—There is little to add to my last report. As explained to members at the last meeting, further action will be taken at the appropriate time.

FIRE ALARMS.—You have been told that plans are on foot to meet the situation and that we were watching the position. I have since had it pointed out that to instal these alarms until Croxley gets a fire station would be an unnecessary waste of money. I understand that a site is being sought for a Fire Station, and that the alarms will be installed when the new Fire Station is built.

GAS CHARGES.—In reference to these, we have now obtained a copy of the Watford and St. Albans Gas Order, 1934, which authorised the price of gas to Croxley consumers being charged at nearly 25% more than in Watford. On investigation we find that this part of the contract expired in 1937. We are surprised that application for a revision of the Order has not been made long before now. This matter is being taken up by our new members on the Council, and we look forward to the application to the Board of Trade being made at an early date. It is interesting to note that the contract made with the Gas Company for street lighting expires in 1940.

UNFINISHED ROADS.—These roads are at last to be made up. Notices to this effect have been posted up by the Council.

BALDWIN'S LANE.—We are told that Baldwin's Lane is now to be made up as far as building is completed.

QUINQUENNIAL REVALUATION.—See Councillor Price's article. This was left out of our last issue owing to lack of space.

L.M.S. RAILWAY WAITING ROOM AT HIGH ST. STATION.—We understand a scheme has been drawn up and we look forward to the completion of the waiting room before next winter.

The Association also took up the matter of the closing of the level crossing at Croxley Moor. On May 25 the Railway Company wrote us that after giving the matter further consideration they had decided to restore the wicket gates.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING.—We have asked for a pedestrian crossing in Watford Road near the bus stops that we obtained at the top of the hill near Pike's Stores. On May 16 the Herts C.C. wrote that formal application for the installation of this crossing had been made to the Ministry of Transport. On July 7 the crossing was installed. We are also endeavouring to get a crossing near the Met. Station. We made application to the Watford Corporation for a crossing at the Cassio Bridge end of Rickmansworth Road. No doubt members will have seen the illuminated crossing that has been installed. A letter of thanks was sent to the Corporation for this. We seem to receive more sympathetic treatment from outside than from our own Council.

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LONDON PASSENGER TRANSPORT BOARD.—We took up with the above the bad condition of the road at the bus stop at the Met. Station, people being unable to board the buses dry-shod on a wet day owing to the large puddles, and are pleased to report that this was speedily attended to. We also reported the congestion at Watford Market Street, and suggested that queue barriers be erected. We were told that the pavement space is insufficient to allow this, but that the matter of congestion will be considered.

PROPOSED NEW ROAD.—This is being pursued, but at the moment we are still waiting for the Council to receive a deputation asked for some while ago.

PROPOSED JUNIOR SCHOOL, LITTLE GREEN LANE.—We have protested that this is too far away for the bulk of Croxley junior children, suggesting a more central site. We appreciate, however, that owing to the lack of town-planning the County Council have little choice in the matter of a central site.

TRAVELLING FACILITIES—CHATER SCHOOL.—We have taken this matter up with the Education Authorities, and are informed that facilities are not provided where children live less than two miles from the school. We suggested that the parents might help with the cost of a conveyance, but again we were told that, even so, the Council could not depart from their regulation. We are now in touch with the London Passenger Transport Board to see if we can get a better service of buses at school times or even a special bus. Any parents who find difficulty in getting their children to school might communicate with us. The more evidence we have the stronger will be our case.

STREET LIGHTING.—We have again this year taken up the matter of our street lamps not being lit during the Summer months. I understand that they will be lit from August 1, the same as last year after our protest.



LOOK OUT for errors in the advertisements. Four errors have been purposely made in the printing of the adverts. and a prize of 2s. 6d. each will be paid to the writers of the first two letters opened on August 1 giving the correct details. Please address your letters to:—

The Chairman, Mr. N. P. Parrott,
12, Durrants Drive.

The envelopes must be marked "Advert. Contest."

It is important to mark your envelope or it will be opened before the date. Envelopes so marked will be retained until the evening of August 1, thoroughly mixed in the presence of four members, and the first two correct ones opened will receive the prizes.

Destruction of Trees

The Council has complained of the destruction of trees planted in some of the roads. That the complaint is justified we must admit, and we appeal to all residents to help us in our endeavours to stop these senseless actions. We can only do this with the co-operation of everyone, as the culprits must be "caught in the act." *A reward of £2 for information is offered by the Council* and we suggest that no one should hesitate to give the information—the reward may be declined or paid to charity.

Other roads are yet to be taken over by the Council in which we hope trees will be planted. We must, therefore, show our eagerness to protect the trees already planted—*they are our property*, as much as the flowers in the gardens.

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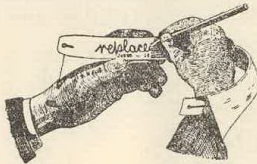
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OPEN SPACES

Sir,—Are we selfish? As we pass to and fro do we give the members of the future a thought? Many are selfishly content and say, "Why worry as long as Jack is all right." The Baldwins Lane area has been sadly neglected in the matter of open spaces. Maybe lack of foresight on the part of planning experts or other causes perhaps. Whatever the cause, we cannot afford to neglect this matter any longer. There are one or two spaces left, easily accessible that is, while the present owners or tenants remain; but should they, either through death or force of circumstances, relinquish their hold on these delightful spots, what happens? More builders! So why not a park for the public next to the L.N.E. Railway bridge in Baldwins Lane?

For those who have not noticed the beauties of this spot I would advise them to walk up Winton Drive for two hundred yards and then look back. The site is well timbered and a delightful place for a future playground.

The mansion could no doubt be converted into a Community Centre or Library or Clubhouse, and the poultry farm cleared for a park. Sheltered by the boundary wall is an ideal spot for a bowling green, three pitches midfield and say six courts on the road side. Opposite, on what is now the sewage outfall, a children's playground surmounted by a rock garden.

Some may say, "This will put your rates up!" It should not, if run as a business proposition as is Moor Park Golf Club.

We must see that our Council supports us in this matter in approaching the powers that be and making the necessary zoning arrangements. The property adjoins the Green Belt, so why not continue the good work? The Council must know that we are interested in the future aspects of Croxley and its amenities.—"FORESIGHT."

[Should you like to support this notion drop a line to the Secretary with any further suggestions you may have in mind.]
—EDITOR.]



CINEMA CHAT

DENHAM INVADED

The French Army is now in occupation at Denham—or at least that is the impression you would get if you visited the studios there at the present moment.

Hundreds of extras have been called to represent Poilus of

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the French Army for the right shooting on the thrilling fortification scenes in the new Irving Asher production, "Ten Days in Paris." These scenes are being taken on location behind the studios. Faithful reproductions of sections of the Maginot Line have been built, complete with gun turrets and secret entrances. These grim settings are the background to a sinister invasion of foreign agents, who seek to penetrate this closely-guarded area.

Rex Harrison, who is cast as a young Englishman mistakenly identified as a foreign spy, and Karen Verne endeavour to prevent a munition train, carrying a time bomb, from penetrating the line.

The finished result should be packed with thrills and suspense, combined with carefully interwoven humour. It should be a fitting successor to "Q-Planes," which had its West End premiere early this month, and "Spy in Black," which is soon to follow. Tim Whelan is the director.





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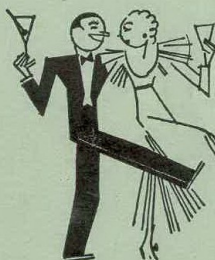
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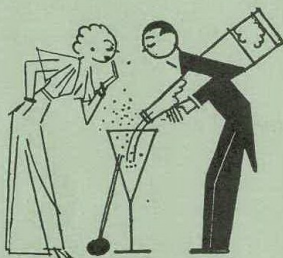
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