

COMMENT

The publication of good news can be compared with an excellent vintage wine; firstly because it is rare and secondly in the pleasure it affords. Conversely, the opportunities to publish distasteful or disappointing news are only too frequent—and unwelcome. Yet there are occasions when circumstances do not permit choice.

This is such an occasion.

On page 2 of this issue we take the very unusual step in publishing correspondence which took place between this Association and Rickmansworth Council on the question of Bus Shelters.

Why has this step been taken?

Because the Association Executive felt it was under an obligation to its members and the public to provide evidence with which they can judge the issue for themselves.

The Association took the initiative in 1953 as soon as the Act empowering local Councils to build shelters was passed. For some time it has been a matter of concern that in the whole of Croxley Green there was but one solitary shelter. Compare this with the six between Ricky Station and the foot of Scots Hill.

When reading the correspondence we invite you to observe:

(1) The dates of the letters.

(2) That since February 1954, when the Council claimed they were "making enquiries of other local authorities that had experience of shelters," other enterprising local authorities from coast to coast, in the Home Counties and on our own doorstep in Wembley and Watford had seized the opportunity and had shelters built free of cost by private firms in return for advertising rights.

(3) The Council's letter of 29/7/54 stated finance was the stumbling block (strange how other authorities overcame this) and implied the Half-Yearly Estimates of October 1954 may be the solution. Was this matter even considered in the Half-Yearly Estimates of October 1954? Or in March 1955? Or in October 1955?

Now two and a half years after the Association raised the matter we understand the surveyor is to give a report of costs in March 1956.

The March of Time—or the Ides of March?

In 1953/54 it is understood that a shelter suitable

for narrow pavements could have been obtained for less than £40; which would equal 1/400th part of rd. on the Rates!

We have reason to believe certain individual Councillors have been and are opposed to shelters in Croxley and it is our view the Highways Committee have never evinced any genuine wish to have them built. Moreover, we consider the correspondence (apart from comparison with other councils) is ample proof of this. Indeed the Council's protestations of "enquiries" and "financial difficulties" do not show the Council in a very creditable light when the facts are revealed.

We leave you to form your own conclusions.

We also wonder in how many more respects Croxley is the Cinderella of the Urban District area.

We all now know the worst as regards the new Rating figures. One fact emerges—that forecasts given in this magazine in 1954 have proved remarkably accurate. This is worthy of comment as these forecasts were nearly a year ahead of the national press.

On a national basis the revised ratings produced some remarkable results; here are a few:

	Increase	Rateable value now
Rickmansworth	90%	£515,075
Chorleywood	64%	£106,997
City of Westminster ...	100%	£22,250,000
England and Wales ...	72%	£622,947,351

Kensington has an increase of 54%.

Hertfordshire has an increase of 76%.

Current rate demands will be on the new ratings and it has been asked whether or not these are likely to alter as a result of many successful appeals. In our opinion the answer is "No." According to our information local and county authorities anticipate the new Rating figures will generally be upheld.

A few possible queries are given elsewhere in this issue. They are not comprehensive as this issue could not cope with all the possible queries and situations. Any member who is in difficulty on this matter will be given any assistance or guidance by the Association if they advise the Editor or Secretary, leaving their name, address and phone number, if any.

A.T.T.

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BUS SHELTERS — CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk of the Council. 13th October, 1953.
Dear Sir,

I understand that Local Authorities are now empowered to erect Bus Shelters.

If this be so, I shall be grateful if you will inform me whether it is the intention of your Council to take any action regarding the erection of Shelters in Croxley Green.

I should like to draw your attention to the fact that several such Shelters are needed in Croxley Green and I would mention, in particular, Croxley Metropolitan Line Station, Croxley Green L.M.S. Station, and the Red House corner of New Road.

Yours faithfully,

Council Offices. 16th October, 1953.

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of the 13th October. You are quite right: an Act passed last Session includes a clause giving local authorities power to provide bus shelters subject to certain conditions. I have just had an opportunity of reporting the terms of the Act on this point to my Committee.

Before they decide to exercise their new powers the Council will naturally want some information as to cost and other matters. Moreover, the Act requires consultations with other statutory bodies, e.g. the County Council in respect of county roads. The Council's officers have received instructions to go into these matters and report further.

I have noted the sites you suggest for bus shelters and these will certainly be borne in mind.

Yours faithfully,

The Clerk of the Council. 16th February, 1954.
Dear Sir,

Bus Shelters

I have been instructed by the Committee of this Association to ask whether you are yet in a position to give me any more definite information.

Yours faithfully,

Council Offices. 17th February, 1954.

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of the 16th February. The Council are making enquiries as to any local authority that has had actual experience of the kind of shelter they have in mind, so that the Council will not be in a position just yet to determine upon the definite course of action.

Yours faithfully,

The Clerk of the Council. 29th June, 1954.
Dear Sir,

I would refer you to your letter of the 17th February and previous correspondence exchanged between us regarding the erection of Bus Shelters.

The attention of the Committee of this Association has been drawn to the fact that the Highways Committee of your Council has decided to defer further consideration of this matter until next October.

Our Committee is extremely dissatisfied with that decision as it can see no reason for leaving this matter until October, when it would appear that shelters should be completed by October.

I should be grateful if you would inform me whether it would be possible for a delegation from this Association to meet the Council to discuss this very vexed question.

Yours faithfully,

The Clerk of the Council. 10th July, 1954.
Dear Sir,

I am asked by my Committee to convey to you how much they appreciate the interest shewn by your Council in the matter of Road Safety as affected by the lack of Bus Shelters at certain positions in the Croxley Green area.

We have recently observed many* advertisements shewing shelters very reasonably priced, and I would suggest that this aspect can also be considered parallel with the urgency and necessity.

Yours faithfully,

The Clerk of the Council. 16th August, 1954.
Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 29th ultimo.

My Committee trust that the imminent consideration of shelters by the Council will be successfully resolved: needless to say my Committee will be pleased to help in any way it can.

Yours faithfully,

Council Offices. 17th August, 1954.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th August. Until comparatively recently only the London Transport Executive had power to erect bus shelters in this District, but now that the Council have such power also they are considering where shelters should be erected when there is money available for the purpose. As I said in my last letter, the problem is largely one of finance.

I take it that, for the time being at any rate, the Association are not now pressing the Council to receive a deputation.

Yours faithfully,

The Clerk of the Council. 13th September, 1954.
Dear Sir,

I thank you for your letter of the 17th ultimo regarding the erection of Bus Shelters by your Council.

My Committee are happy to leave this matter in the hands of the Council as they are confident that it will receive the utmost attention of the Council, and they are sure that the Council will be able to find the small amount of money required for this very necessary purpose.

Yours faithfully,

Council Offices. 29th July, 1954.

Dear Sir,

I now have the instructions of the Council on your two letters of the 29th June and 10th July last. The reason why the Council adjourned consideration of this question until October is that no provision has been made in this year's estimates for expenditure on this subject. It is the practice of the Council to review their estimates half way through the financial year, i.e. in September, and this review may or may not furnish an opportunity of providing some money for this purpose without increasing next half-year's rates. In the meantime, as you have noticed, the Road Safety Committee is making further enquiries as to types and costs and so on.

In your letter of the 10th July you drew particular attention to two sites in Croxley Green, where the Association considered shelters should be provided. The Council gave consideration to these two sites, among others, when the matter was considered earlier this year: and if and when the Council find themselves able to provide any money for this purpose, their attention shall certainly be called to both sites again.

You will gather from this letter that the Council appreciate the desirability for more bus shelters being provided in the District but that the problem is largely one of finance. There is no action the Council can take, however, until they can see their way to finding the money, and that cannot be done before October. If, in these circumstances, the Association still think that a deputation would serve to advance in any way what both the Association and the Council have in mind, perhaps you will let me know and I will take further instructions.

Yours faithfully,

THE BUMMAREE'S BEDTIME STORY

I should have written this a few weeks ago but was unable to do so because I had not received the permission of the Society for the Prevention of Ball Point Pen Breakers to remove my pen from my pocket; and consequently had to await such action by a Pen-out of Pocket Porter. Funny though, when he arrived to perform the oracle he had to send for my tailor to remove a thread from the seam, and a cigarette factory sweeper-upper to remove some tobacco which had had the temerity to linger there.

The paper, too, was a problem as there was a slow moving rumour that the go slow movement was gaining such momentum that it had actually threatened to stop altogether.

For what bunkum I have written, many apologies; but do forgive my lapse as I have been waiting for the ticket which will entitle me to become the "biggest bumble-footed Bummaree in Bumbledom." Alas, no such ticket has arrived, so I must resign myself to waiting at the market door for my pound of "tripe" to be passed around like a porter's spare cap until it finally reaches me in such condition as to prompt me to send for a "chippie," a "snob" and carrier of amongst other things, nails, so that I may sole my shoes and console my soul with the knowledge that what is, must be.

Yes, it is bunkum, but oh how I have been tempted to write not bunkum but downright words of condemnation against those poor misguided individuals who, under the guise of job protection, may well be "jobbing" themselves out of a job. It is one thing to collectively bargain for the betterment of conditions

generally, and in this support of the country is always forthcoming. But it is another thing entirely to hold the public to ransom merely to enforce restrictive practices which we could do well without.

Just for one moment imagine how ridiculous it would be if everyone worked to rule, went slow, adopted restrictive practices and the like. Imagination could really run riot! but I can think of a series of "working to rule" incidents which might get rid of such foolhardiness.

1. Doctor and midwife working to rule.
2. Hospitals working only 9.30 to 5 p.m. No work Saturdays, Sundays, all national holidays. Long staff leave at Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, and of course two months in the summer.
3. Stores and shops open only from Monday to Friday.
4. No early morning milk deliveries.
5. The cashier and pay clerks taking up to two weeks to make up one week's pay packet.
6. Fishing fleets fishing only on fine days.
7. The undertaker working to rule in deference to the practices of his client taking so long over his tasks. . . .!

That I am opposed to restrictive practices, go slows, working to rules, and all such features should be clear to all who have read so far. These indulgencies will bring unemployment and want upon us much more quickly than any external causes.

Perhaps then, and only then, will the long-suffering public act and turn the "work to rule" completely around so that the meaning of the word WORK might be impressed on these ostriches.

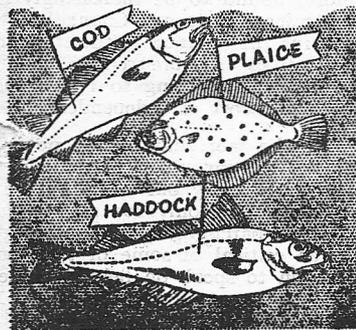
T.P.

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AGENT FOR THE FAMOUS BIRDS EYE FROSTED FOODS
AND GIBSON'S PORK SAUSAGES

The Civil Defence Officer of Chorleywood is to be shared with Rickmansworth during the absence, through illness, of the Council's own officer. It would appear that it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the continued interest of the enrolled volunteers, a state of affairs which is almost common throughout the country. Whether Rickmansworth will have to resort to the steps taken by other authorities who have got rid of their volunteers who took no active part in the activities, remains to be seen.

Staff Difficulties continue to cause concern at Basing House and it is noteworthy that only one or two applications are received when vacancies are advertised. This position is bound to be reflected in time in the general standards of Local Government staffs, not only here but throughout the country. It is really a question of the rate for the job not being adequate, caused, without doubt, by the numbers employed being out of proportion to the volume of useful work to be done, thus forcing the authorities to adopt lower salary scales as a means of levelling out the expenditure. Without doubt the time will come when only half the number of personnel will be employed to do the same amount of work, and who will receive commensurate salaries.

Caravans and Moveable Dwellings are becoming ever less popular in the eyes of the authorities, and we understand that approval will only be given to continued and lengthy occupation in exceptional cases. These moveable dwellings have over the years done much to alleviate the serious housing difficulties which have beset the area, and enabled families to live within a reasonable distance of their source of livelihood. It is to be hoped that, as with sub-standard property, no hasty decisions will be made.

The Further Rise in the Bank Rate and the Chancellor's squeeze are likely to seriously affect all development plans being considered throughout the county. Whilst a little (or in fact a lot) of economy needs to be practised by the County Authorities in particular and in a lesser way by the Urban and Rural Councils, it would be a backward step if work could not continue on those projects where considerable detail planning and administrative work had been expended, as should lengthy delays occur, much of this background work would have to be carried out again.

The Green and Copthorne Road are to be discussed with the representatives of Gonville and Caius College to see whether some agreement can be reached. We wonder whether these meetings will be perpetuated in the same way as the Commoners' rights.

Conferences held at seaside resorts are attracting the attention of Councillors and Chief Officers at this particular time of the year. It seems that hot-air and nonsensical niceties need the intermixture of the sea-air at well-known resorts before the words of wisdom spoken can be fully appreciated and understood. It would not be surprising to see an item of expenditure in a Council's accounts covering made-to-measure swim suits so that the visiting gentry may be properly attired as befitting the surroundings and occasion.

Many of you will probably have seen recently a poster which says "I don't want to spend in a week all you earn in a week," and goes on to say "Well I'm not paid what I deserve." The poster was made facetiously, though it may have contained some truth.

A state of inflation seems to be accepted to-day almost as a fact of life. It influences the demand for consumer goods and reduces the pressure of the demand for consumer goods to buy the various goods we see displayed in the shops. We find the necessary self-discipline and others find it takes all their enthusiasm for saving damped when the purchasing power of their money years later may buy only half what it would have bought a number of people who once thought that their Post War Credit Certificates would just how much they will buy by the time they come to do so.

Though my colleague's remark about the poster was a number of wage claims in the air that considerable numbers of people would be foolish as well as unjust to expect any one section is unfortunate, if inevitable, that increases in wage rates in railway workers and while at the time of writing higher far for wages, that can only be a matter of a short time, and increase also be expected. So everyone else will want more pay.

There is, however, one section of the community who are keeping pace with rising prices. I refer to pensioners—old people who save during their working days in order to have more money when they do less than they hoped for. Many, too, are living on pension money because of a large number of cases occurred several years ago when salaries were high.

Though Croyley Green is by no means unique, we have many members of this Association. If all our older people had to provide for retirement, we might feel less sympathy for those who have saved regularly or perhaps paid into a superannuation scheme as part of their conditions of service. And, of course, many own houses, particularly in this type of locality, so that they would not confront them for ever. Though the rent bogey rates which, like everything else, tend to increase rather than decrease.

Now it is not my intention to set up as a pensioners' payers—not Rate dodgers—Association, but it has seemed to me that there have yet been, devised to bring a measure of relief to this kind of a reduction in the general rate and, I agree, they get the same in a more favourable position to maintain their *status quo*, increases, though I hasten to acknowledge that there are many who are not.

In a time of generally rising prices it would be unrealistic to expect costs. It is, therefore, bound to be increasingly difficult to payers and we have to leave it to our Councillors to do the large sums of money for the County Authority and often feel through our representatives is more remote and less tangible. Rickmansworth are in fact managing to retain their independence, interesting to evaluate the cost of independence.

Notwithstanding the fact that figures published recently show that we are receiving £2,000 or more a year, most of us have to pause to think of it most urgently. In the same way our Council have to decide all to be of one mind and are only too aware of such facts, for example, permits only of patching up and making do, a decision. We have at times been critical of some of the Council's actions, but we have claimed with justification to speak on behalf of the majority.

The sentiment was expressed at the Council Dinner last year of independence and individuality. The same sentiment applies to small localities by larger neighbours to their absorption in the ultimately of effective local administration.

We could arrive at the state where we paid all our rates, etc., would be financed at National level. It might conceivably be easier under such conditions to help our pensioners and other things, or a bit more than we have now, to invest in National

er exhibited in Underground stations which reads, "Don't suggest investing in National Savings. A colleague of mine earn yway, so I can't spend it all!" The remark was of

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es in with our Income Tax and our police service, education, bly be fairer and cheaper than at present and it might be rs hard pressed. And it might even leave us with some- al Savings.

R. H. HUTCHINSON.

The Shops in Baldwins Lane, at the time of writing, are still minus fittings and, of course, more important, tenants. Meanwhile the interest continues to be paid on monies expended by the Council. Of course it is only ratepayers' money.

Development of land fronting Rousebarn Lane and at the rear of Links Way within the Watford R.D.C. area, which will permit the erection of thirty-five houses, seems to have caused some heartburning. Why? When after all the famous Hertfordshire Plan details had been foisted, without much opportunity of redress, on the ratepayers, we find that pre-determined lines of the Aylesbury radial road had been abandoned almost without anyone's knowledge. It is amazing if our own Council do not know what is going on in adjoining administrative districts, and this case suggests the lack of co-operation which exists. It is understandable that Councillors might not know of these moves, but surely that breed of humanity which flourishes under the title of Planners, advises the elected Councillors and the affected inhabitants of what is afoot?

Slum Clearance activities seem to be taking up a considerable amount of the Sanitary Inspector's time. It will certainly be a good thing to see the end of all dwellings which are unfit for occupation, but it is hoped that undue action in this respect will not unnecessarily increase the existing waiting lists for Council Houses.

Housing and Economic Rentals seem to be subjects uppermost in the minds of all Councillors throughout the country at the present time and, regardless of the political party in control of the various Councils, decisions will have to be made which will make them unpopular with certain sections of the ratepayers who put them into office. This is a very deep problem, which has caused more bad feeling between ratepayer and Councillor than all other subjects added together. It will be interesting to follow the trend throughout the county during the next few months, as the full effects of the changed financial position will become evident to all during the coming financial year.

Street Collections continue to grow in number, but no doubt serve a very useful purpose by supporting those charitable organisations and institutions which find it impossible to continue their work without recourse to such collections. The following dates have been agreed for the organisations mentioned to collect within the district:—

- Apr. 28th. King George's Fund for Sailors.
- May 5th. Herts Fund for the Blind.
- May 12th. British Red Cross Society.
- June 9th. Sailors' Children's Society.
- June 23rd. Herts Association of Boys' Clubs.
- July 14th. Church Army.
- July 21st. Forces Day.
- July 28th. Alexandria Day.
- Sept. 15th. R.A.F. Association.
- Sept. 22nd. C. of E. Children's Society.
- Sept. 29th. Royal National Lifeboat Institution.
- Oct. 20th. Herts Society for Welfare of

Handicapped.

Nov. 10th. British Legion.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Many of you will probably have seen recently a poster exhibited in Underground stations which reads, "Don't spend in a week all you earn in a week," and goes on to suggest investing in National Savings. A colleague of mine who read the poster remarked, "Well I'm not paid what I earn anyway, so I can't spend it all!" The remark was made facetiously, though it may have contained a ^{drop} ⁱⁿ ^{con-} ^{sum-} ^{ption} ^{of} ^{part} At all events it set me off on a train of thought.

A state of inflation seems to be accepted to-day almost without question, but savings do exercise a moderating influence and reduce the pressure of the demand for consumer goods; for money saved cannot at the same time be used to buy the various goods we see displayed in the shops. While almost all of us would like to be able to save, some lack the necessary self-discipline and others find it takes all their income to provide themselves with essentials. Many find their enthusiasm for saving damped when the purchasing power of a pound steadily declines and, for all one knows, ten years later may buy only half what it would have bought during the year in which it was saved. There must be a great number of people who once thought that their Post War Credits would be well worth receiving and now wonder ruefully just how much they will buy by the time they come to draw them.

Though my colleague's remark about the poster was intended humorously, it seems reasonable to infer from the number of wage claims in the air that considerable numbers of workers do in fact believe that they are not paid what they earn. I find it difficult to think that they want more pay in order to save more. If wages are rising generally it would be foolish as well as unjust to expect any one section to stand aside and allow their living standards to fall. It is unfortunate, if inevitable, that increases in wage rates in certain industries, notably coal and railways, have much farther reaching effects than comparable increases elsewhere. It is not long ago that increases in pay were awarded to railway workers and while at the time of writing higher fares have not been announced in order to meet the heavier bill for wages, that can only be a matter of a short time, and increased freight charges leading to higher prices all round may also be expected. So everyone else will want more pay.

There is, however, one section of the community which, in particular, is very badly situated when it comes to keeping pace with rising prices. I refer to pensioners—old age or superannuated. Many of these are people who did save during their working days in order to have more comfort in their later years, and now find that what they saved does less than they hoped for. Many, too, are living on pensions based on salary at the time of retirement which in a large number of cases occurred several years ago when salaries and prices were well below present-day levels.

Though Croxley Green is by no means unique, we have very many pensioners in the area, many of whom are members of this Association. If all our older people had been improvident and had taken no steps at all while at work to provide for retirement, we might feel less sympathy for them over their present difficulties. But we know that some saved regularly or perhaps paid into a superannuation scheme, while others took jobs where a pension on retirement was part of their conditions of service. And, of course, many provided in some measure for the future by buying their own houses, particularly in this type of locality, so that the problem of having to find the rent for somewhere to live would not confront them for ever. Though the rent bogey does not menace them they still have to meet demands for rates which, like everything else, tend to increase rather than diminish.

Now it is not my intention to set up as a pensioners' Poujade, and this is the bulletin of a Residents' and Rate-payers—not Rate dodgers—Association, but it has seemed to me a pity that no practical means can be, or at any rate have yet been, devised to bring a measure of relief to this kind of ratepayer. They only benefit if everyone else does by a reduction in the general rate and, I agree, they get the same services as everyone else. People at work, however, are in a more favourable position to maintain their *status quo*, as they probably stand to benefit under a round of wage increases, though I hasten to acknowledge that there are many exceptions.

In a time of generally rising prices it would be unrealistic not to expect local authorities to have to meet higher costs. It is, therefore, bound to be increasingly difficult to keep down the amount required to be levied from the rate-payers and we have to leave it to our Councillors to do the best they can on our behalf. We have, of course, to find large sums of money for the County Authority and often feel that any control over expenditure which we may have through our representatives is more remote and less tangible than desirable. The extent to which localities such as Rickmansworth are in fact managing to retain their independence may by this token be questionable and it might be interesting to evaluate the cost of independence.

Notwithstanding the fact that figures ^{publ.} ^{recently} ^{sh.} ^{A.} a considerable increase in the number of persons receiving £2,000 or more a year, most of us have to pause before we spend our money and consider what we require most urgently. In the same way our Council have to decide our most urgent requirements. We would scarcely expect all to be of one mind and are only too aware of such facts as that the amount of money available for highways, for example, permits only of patching up and making do, a deplorable state of affairs which cannot continue indefinitely. We have at times been critical of some of the Council's actions, but have not been deliberately unconstructive and have claimed with justification to speak on behalf of the majority of Croxley residents.

The sentiment was expressed at the Council Dinner last month that it would be a pity if Rickmansworth lost its independence and individuality. The same sentiment applies to Croxley Green, for it is but a step from the submergence of small localities by larger neighbours to their absorption in turn by something even bigger, to the complete negation ultimately of effective local administration.

We could arrive at the state where we paid all our rates in with our Income Tax and our police service, education, etc., would be financed at National level. It might conceivably be fairer and cheaper than at present and it might be easier under such conditions to help our pensioners and others hard pressed. And it might even leave us with something, or a bit more than we have now, to invest in National Savings.

R. H. HUTCHINSON.

NEW RATING — A FEW POINTS

It is impossible to cover here all aspects of the Valuation for Rating Act, 1953, as a result of which properties have been revalued for rating purposes. For the benefit of members we publish a series of possible queries and answers; readers may find the answer to their particular query.

Question.—The new lists show two values, "gross valuation" and "rateable value." What is the significance of each?

Answer.—The gross valuation is the estimate of the yearly rental value of the property. From this a deduction is made for repairs and insurance and the remaining figure is the "rateable value." Rates are payable on the latter figure.

Q.—Which is the more important of the two figures?

A.—The "gross valuation," as this is the figure against which an appeal is made: the deduction for repairs and insurance is on a fixed scale, against which there is no appeal.

Q.—What is the basis determining the gross valuation?

A.—In private dwelling houses—on the rent it would have obtained on or about 30th June, 1939. It would be assumed that such a rent would be under normal letting conditions, that is, tenant paying rates and landlord repairs. It would also be assumed that all present local amenities, transport, etc., had been in existence at 30th June, 1939.

Q.—How about shops, offices, etc., on property occupied both as a shop and a residence

A.—The former are assessed, broadly speaking, on the current rental. Where, for example, there is a shop and living accommodation in the same property then the private dwelling portion will only be valued on the 1939 rental basis if it equals 10% or more of the current rental value of the whole premises. If the dwelling portion is less than 10% of the whole premises then the whole premises are assessed on current values or rentals.

Q.—What about garages, etc.?

A.—These may be assessed and included with that of the house or they may be rated separately. If it is a private lock-up garage, having a floor area of 240 square feet or less, it too is assessed on the 1939 value.

This does not apply, however, if it is used for

- (i) goods vehicles or hackney carriages;
- (ii) guests at a hotel, inn or boarding house;
- (iii) used as part of motor premises.

THE APPEAL PROCEDURE

Q.—If I wish to appeal, to whom should it be sent?

A.—The Valuation Officer, 13 Upton Road, Watford.

Q.—When should an appeal be made?

A.—On or after 1st April, 1956.

Q.—How does one go about it?

A.—(i) An "aggrieved person" makes a "proposal" to alter the Valuation List. Obtain a proposal form from the Valuation Officer on which should be stated your proposed amendment and the grounds for such alteration.

(ii) If your proposal (or appeal, if you prefer to call it so) is reasonable the Valuation Officer can reassess the property to a lower figure. If he does not consider your proposal justified he may at any time within 5/6 months object to your appeal.

(iii) If he so objects and you are not prepared to withdraw your appeal, it is listed for hearing by a local Valuation Court.

Q.—Is the decision of this local Valuation Court final?

A.—No, a person who has appeared before this court and is aggrieved by its decision can appeal to a new court of appeal known as the Lands Tribunal.

Q.—How is the local Valuation Court conducted?

A.—It is an independent lay tribunal, sits in public and is fairly informal. You can conduct your own appeal or be represented.

RATES AND INCOME TAX

Q.—What do we pay rates for?

A.—Highways, lighting, education, housing subsidies, refuse removal, open spaces and parks, etc., etc. Look at your rates demand; it's all there!

Q.—If I appeal what rates do I pay while my appeal is considered?

A.—If you lodge it between 1st April, 1956, and 31st March, 1957, you cannot be compelled to pay more rates than you did last year (ended 31st March, 1956) until the appeal is settled.

Q.—If I am a tenant paying rent inclusive of rates how am I affected.

A.—If the rates go up your landlord can ask for the increase. Conversely, if rates go down you should pay less inclusive rent.

Q.—If I am obliged to pay more rates can I get any relief from Income Tax?

A.—Not for private houses wholly occupied as such. If premises are used wholly or in part for a business you will be entitled to regard the additional rates (again wholly or in part according to use) as an additional legitimate trade expense.

Q.—Will the new valuations mean the Income Tax (Schedule A) assessments will also be increased?

A.—There is at present no legislation to cover this and existing Income Tax assessments will remain for the present. Whether or not legislation will be introduced time alone will tell. It is a possibility to which a Chancellor might well be tempted, for it would produce quite an additional few millions to the Exchequer!

And now, in conclusion, will this Act remove all the rating anomalies existing at its conception? It had an unfortunate beginning and successful in its implementation only on the third attempt so to speak; postponed from 1952 to 1953 and to 1956. Its biggest critics say it makes no provision for derated industrial properties. Only when that problem is solved can any revaluation be complete, is their criticism. And what a problem it is indeed.

A.T.T.

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 1955

The Association's Annual General Meeting, held on the 24th November last, threw into prominence a whole range of subjects of more than usual local interest. Most of these were dealt with by the retiring chairman, Mr. A. T. Thomson, and much of the following are extracts from his address.

Scrap Metal Depot—It is felt that had this depot in Rickmansworth instead of Croxley, it would have been permitted to remain a couple of weeks. In view of numerous complaints, the Association is compiling quite a file on this matter, wherein it is asserted that:—

- (a) a permanent licence was granted in the face of protests by local residents and this Association;
- (b) Wherever complaints had been lodged, the reason has been minimised or temporarily removed before an official visit could be made;
- (c) conditions of the licence have never been fulfilled but openly abused;
- (d) in the opinion of the Association, an extraordinary immunity is enjoyed from disciplinary action by the Council.

It is intended to pursue this matter, in Mr. Thomson's own words, "to whatever level or authority necessary."

Bus Shelters.—This has been amply covered in other columns and perhaps the general attitude of ratepayers can be reflected in the Chairman's comments as follows: "Perhaps I am a little impatient. After all, if it takes two weeks to erect a Bailey bridge, presumably we should make allowances for such a major engineering feat as a pre-fabricated shelter."

Shops Site—Bottom Baldwins Lane.—The decision against building shops on this vacant site has already been reported in earlier issues. Disappointment has of late been tempered by amusement at the way our "planners" adhere to their view that it would be dangerous to have shops in such a position, even though served by a private road. Whilst watching with interest the erection of a new hotel on this very corner, we wonder if suggestions for a name would be welcome: as our own choice, "The Hypocrisy Hotel," seems eminently suitable.

Open Meeting.—To offset the subjects already mentioned, this records an occasion both instructive and enjoyable to all who take an interest in local affairs. It was the scene of lively exchanges between residents

and their elected representatives on the Council, many of whom may have felt themselves brought into somewhat sharp contact with public opinion. Comment by the Press on the holding of such meetings was extremely favourable and it is hoped that the Councillors will be able to return to a similar meeting within the next month or two.

Rating Act.—This, too, is of sufficient importance as to have been widely discussed in other columns. It is enough to mention here that the Association is in close touch with the Herts Federation of Ratepayers' Associations and other similar bodies.

Membership.—During 1955 the membership of the Association again shewed an increase and is now in the region of 2,000.

Top of Baldwin's Lane.—The development in this area is being watched with particular interest—for several reasons. It will be recalled that this corner was the stumbling block quoted by the London Transport Executive in the Association's pleas to extend the 385 bus route down the Green to terminate at the Metro Station in lieu of Manor Way. In the verbal fencing that followed: "Widen the road and we will run a bus service there," feinted the L.T.E. "Put a bus service there and we will widen the road," parried the Herts C.C. So nothing was done and everybody contributed towards doing it. Now that the development is progressing and there will shortly be completed houses and footpaths, can we expect the widening to take place? Our information says "No."

The Green.—Aptly, the Council, public and everybody concerned appears to have been and to remain very "green" on this subject. There appears also to be an absence of light in more ways than one. Eventually, no doubt, we shall see—still more green, perhaps! However. . . .

Lighting.—Soon the new main road lighting will extend to Cassio Bridge—in time to enable us to find our way to the new pub no doubt.

Road Safety.—Be it local or national, this problem remains ever with us. It receives constant consideration so far as our own danger spots are concerned. We are not at all happy about them and the knowledge that nearly all other areas have similar problems gives us no comfort. At times we wonder if any satisfactory solutions exist.

Are you happy about

**RATES ?
BUS SHELTERS ?
ROADS & TRANSPORT ?
STREET LIGHTING ?**

air your views and ask your questions at the

OPEN MEETING

to be held at 8 p.m., on

**THURSDAY, 26th APRIL, 1956, at the
DICKINSON GUILDHOUSE**

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE, 1956

This seems a suitable occasion to show a full list of officers and committee members elected at the Association's Annual General Meeting in November last, together with addresses:—

President:

Dr. A. F. Miller, 41 Watford Road.

Vice-Presidents:

Mr. R. W. Annear, Langley, Green Lane.
Dr. A. L. Ferguson, 110 Cassiobury Drive, Watford.
Col. C. E. Rothery-Moss, 35 Watford Road.

Chairman:

Mr. R. H. Hutchinson, 4 Rochester Way.

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. M. L. Watkins, 123 Winton Drive.

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. N. E. Hoey, 9 Harvey Road.

Hon. Treasurer:

Mr. J. S. Robinson, 46 Warwick Way.

Committee:

Mrs. R. J. Pitkin, 36 Scots Hill.
Mrs. T. Pooley, 72 Malvern Way.
Mrs. G. Wilkins, 22 Warwick Way.
Mr. A. Bleek, 29 Durrants Drive.
Mr. H. W. R. Fowler, 140 Baldwins Lane.
Mr. Hoey, 9 Harvey Road.
Mr. W. J. North, 193 Baldwins Lane.
Mr. E. H. Page, 226 Watford Road.
Mr. T. Pooley, 72 Malvern Way.
Mr. A. T. Thomson, 15 Lewes Way.
Mr. G. Wilcox, 92 New Road.
Mr. A. C. Woollard, 239 Watford Road.

The Executive Committee of this Association, in common with all similar organisations, is the body responsible for all action taken and is comprised of public-spirited residents prepared to give their time and efforts towards the betterment of conditions and preservation of existing amenities in Croxley Green.

New members prepared to serve on the Committee are always welcome and can be assured that their views and opinions will receive ready attention. Why not add YOUR weight to the work already being done?

Come and join us!

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SOCIAL NOTES

CROXLEY THEATRE CLUB

"Certain aspects of this house, and the people in it, strike me as being a little—unusual."

Such is the prize understatement of a visitor to a certain lonely Yorkshire cottage, the setting for the forthcoming production of the Croxley Theatre Club on Thursday 19th and Friday 20th April, 1956, in the Dickinson Guildhouse. You, too, will find the domestic set-up a little—unusual, if you can tear yourself away from your fireside to see Leslie Sar's thrilling play "**Intent to Murder.**" Tickets can be obtained from Club members or at the door. Each performance starts at 7.45 p.m.

S.W. HERTS FEDERATION OF TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILDS

A very successful Drama Festival was held on Wednesday and Thursday, March 14th and 15th, at Dickinson's Guildhouse, three teams competing at each session on Wednesday afternoon and evening and Thursday afternoon, and a total of nine plays being presented. The Adjudicator, Mrs. Marie Dexter, said there had been a good selection, both grave and gay, and the two local Guilds both received commendation on the plays they presented. Mrs. Dexter said she had been very interested to see "**Come Home My Children,**" entered by the Evening Guild, as she had been told by a Producer friend, "a very good one," she assured the audience, that "this play was almost a good play." Anyone knowing the difficulties of choosing a good "all women's" play will realise the feeling of satisfaction experienced by the Group on hearing this. A very appreciative audience of approximately 200 was present at each session, and the general verdict was that the Festival had been a great success.

CROXLEY GREEN SOCIETY'S SOCIAL

The Social organised by the Society, which had to be postponed in February, will now take place on Saturday, April 7th, at 7.30 p.m. in the Guildhouse. Organisations will be sent tickets to replace the ones sold previously, and any organisation which did not take them before, but who wish to attend may get tickets from Mrs. Lucas, 15 Copthorne Road, the price: 2/- each.

All residents of Croxley Green are asked to support this venture, which should provide entertainment for young and old, with Dancing, Games, Competitions and Entertainment of Local Talent.

Make sure you buy a ticket.

MEMBERSHIP

Please enrol me as a new/former Member at the Subscription of 2s. per annum.

Full Name

Address

Post or deliver to Secretary, 9 Harvey Road; or if old member to Chief Street Steward, 22 Warwick Way.

(Membership includes husband and wife)