

EPSOM IN 1915

Once again with the passing of another year it is interesting to look back and recall the events of interest which are most conspicuous in the life of the town.

The war has accounted for the suspension of many erstwhile important functions, and the only change which has taken place since last New Year's Day appears to be the denudation of the town of its military visitors. A war hospital at Horton and a military convalescent camp at Woodcote Park have been established during the last twelve months. Annexed are the most interesting events of the year:-

JANUARY

- 6 Mr. G Simpson gave an interesting account of the conditions in France to a large gathering at the Public Hall. He was one of a deputation of the Brotherhoods from this country which visited certain towns in France which had suffered seriously by the war.
- 12 Annual meeting of the Epsom Licensed Victuallers and Beersellers' Protection Society at the Spread Eagle Hotel.
- 18 A fire occurred at the Rural Council's depot, where workshops and sheds let to Mr. A. Kinge, builder, were destroyed. The fire brigade were in attendance for over five hours.
- 19 Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, accompanied by the French Minister of War, M. Millerand, inspected troops attached to the New Army on Epsom Downs. Over 20,000 men were on parade.
- 26 At a meeting of the Urban Council Mr. A. E. Williams gave a report of the result of the conference held in connection with the London District Electric Supply Bill.
Mr. B. Braithwaite presided at the annual meeting of the Epsom Town Dispensary, and was appointed President in succession to the late Rev. E. W. Northey.

FEBRUARY

- 6 The well known author Mr. Hilaire Belloc paid a visit to Epsom and instructed a number of members of the Literary Society in the strategy of war. His subject was "The Progress of the War".
- 6 The final tie for the challenge cup presented by Brigadier-General Gordon Gilmour was completed for on the Recreation Ground.
- 14 Sir Thos. Bucknill presided at the meeting of the Epsom Brotherhood, and in occupying the pulpit for the first time in his life, characterised Dr. Barnardo's Homes as being one of the best institutions in the country for boys.
- 15 Mr. John Bussey, a well known inhabitant, passed away at his residence in Adelphi-road in his 75th year. For 40 years he was a member of the local fire brigade; he served in the capacity of Superintendent for 25 years.
- 16 At a special meeting of the Urban Council members sanctioned the spending of £300 in order to put into possible condition the road leading from Wilmerhatch-lane to Woodcote Park-lane.
The Urban Council signed a petition against Sutton Waterworks Company's Bill.
- 18 The annual meeting of the Epsom Park Bowling Club was held, and it was decided that no matches should be played during the year unless the war terminated before the end of the season. Mr. J. Gow presided.
- 28 "Wars Between Nations and Classes" was the subject of an address delivered to members of the Brotherhood by Mr. F. Roberts, M.P.

MARCH

- 14 The first anniversary services were conducted at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Ashley-road.
- 15 Annual general meeting of the Epsom and Ewell Cottage Hospital, when a very lengthy report of the excellent work achieved at this institution was presented.

- 17 Members of the Epsom Oratorio society gave an interpretation of Mendelssohn's "Lauda Sion" at the Parish Church.
- 29 Interesting accounts of work accomplished by the R.S.P.C.A. were given at the annual meeting of the Epsom branch held in the Public Hall. Sir Ralph Neville was unanimously re-elected President.

APRIL

- 6 Annual meeting of Brayne's Charity the Vicar (the Rev. W. Bainbridge Bell) presiding.
- 8 The tragic death of Mrs. Amy Ivermee, of 62, Lower Court-road, was the subject of an inquest conducted by Mr. Gilbert White.
- 8 Annual vestry meeting of the Parish Church and Christ Church.
- 13 "Accidental death" was a verdict returned at the inquiry touching the death of the three-year-old son of Mr and Mrs. A. Cole, of 54, Wyeth-road, who was burnt whilst playing in the garden.
- 15 Marriage of Mr. C. E. Woodhouse; of Wimbledon Park, and Miss Beryl Harrison, of The Shrubbery, Epsom.
- 19 Death of Miss Mary Anne (Marian) Andrews at the age of 73. For many years prior to 1902 she was postmistress.
- 20 At the annual meeting of the Urban Council Mr. C. Cropley was re-appointed Chairman and Mr. J. Gow Vice-Chairman.
- 21 Annual meeting of Epsom guardians. Mr. B. Braithwaite re-elected to the chair and Col. Lloyd chosen Vice-Chairman.
- 23 Funeral of Miss Andrews.
- 24 Mr. Hilaire Belloc paid another visit to Epsom and gave an interesting lecture to members of the Literary Society. He dealt with the operations in the Dardanelles and the Allies' progress in France and Belgium.

MAY

- 2 Memorial service at the Congregational Church for the late Rev. W. Summers, who was for 23 years minister at the church.
- 7 "Found dead" was the verdict returned at an inquest conducted by Mr Gilbert White on the body of a newly-born male child found tied to a tree on Epsom Common.
- 7 H.R.H. Princess Christian visited Ewell for the purpose of opening the handsome residence known as Ewell-grove as a home for permanently disabled Belgian soldiers.
- 25 At an inquest at the Court House a Verdict of "Suicide during temporary insanity" was given by a jury relative to the death of Elizabeth Holding, age 21 years, a domestic servant.
- 27 Inquest at Ewell on the body of Sidney Albert Rayner, 29, of East-street, Epsom. "Found drowned" in the Hogg's Mill River, West Ewell.

JUNE

- 17 Bishop of Winchester (Dr. Talbot), at the Parish Church.
- 19 General Sir Alfred Turner opened the new rifle range at the chalk pits, Banstead-road.
- 23 Alexandra Day. Over £108 was realised in Epsom and the district by the sale of roses.
- 27 United War service in Rosebery Park. Death of Mr. A. E. Harter, Downs-road, at the age of 72 years. An old resident of Epsom, he was for many years a member of the Urban District Council, and a member of the Board of School Managers.
- 29 At a meeting of the Urban Council public expression was given by members of Epsom's pride in possessing such a hero as driver S. W. Martin, who had been awarded the French Medaille Militaire for conspicuous bravery.

JULY

- 3 Death of Mr. James Elson, of Alexandra-road, aged 70. He was an old and valuable worker of the Congregational Church.
- 21 Funeral of Pte. W. E. Riley. Northumberland Fusiliers, who died at the County of London War Hospital.
- 26 Annual meeting of the Literary Society, Major Sir E. F. Coates, M.P., presiding. The membership was stated to be 450.
- 27 At the meeting of the Urban District Council a long discussion took place as to the efficiency of the fire engine, and it was decided to put the manual to a vigorous test.
- 27 Mr. W. B. Brightmore opened an inquiry into the application of the Urban District Council for sanction to borrow £5,265 for the purpose of sewage disposal.
- 29 At the annual meeting of the Epsom Conservative Club Mr. B. Braithwaite was re-elected president.

AUGUST

- 2 On the initiative of the Kildare Club, London, a sports carnival was held at the Convalescent Camp, Woodcote Park, and this was followed in the evening by a first-class entertainment. The prizes were distributed to the winners of the numerous races and competitions by Lady Cunliffe.
- 2 A quantity of hay was destroyed by fire in a field off Thornton-hill. It was the property of Mr. John Templeton, of Court Farm.
- 4 The anniversary of Declaration Day was observed by a special service at the Parish Church, when the congregation included soldiers from the Convalescent Camp, Woodcote Park, members of the local V.T.C. and fire brigade, and members, officials and employees of the Urban District Council. The vicar (Rev. W. Bainbridge Bell) delivered an appropriate address.
- 17 Sir George Reid, P.C., G.C.M.G., High Commissioner for Australia, visited the Convalescent Camp, and was accorded hearty reception. He

entered into conversation with the Colonials and expressed great satisfaction with the arrangements generally.

- 17 At a meeting of the Urban District Council an application was made by the contractors of the Hook-road storm water sewer that the work should be delayed until after the war, but it was not acceded to. It was, however, agreed that the work must be carried out up to No. 2 manhole.
- 19 Pte. Sidney Albert Faulkner, aged 28 years, of the 24th London regiment, was buried with military honours. Deceased had been undergoing treatment at the City of London war Hospital since July, having been severely wounded whilst fighting in France. A party from Woodcote Convalescent Camp fired three volleys over the grave, and "The Last Post" was sounded.
- 23 Lady Reid, wife of Sir George Reid, P.C., G.C.M.G., paid a visit to Woodcote Convalescent Camp.

SEPTEMBER

- 7 Mr. C. Cropley (Chairman) at a meeting of the Urban District Council, presented medals on behalf of the National Fire Brigades Association to engineer W. Moss, for 20 years' service, and to Fireman H. Arthur for ten years' service in the Epsom Fire Brigade. Bars were also handed to fireman W. H. Hart and Page for five years' service.
At the meeting of the council a letter was received from Mr Chuter Ede, a member serving at the front. The Managers of the Council Schools met under the Chairmanship of Mr B. Braithwaite.
- 8 Christ Church was the scene of a pretty wedding when Mr. F. H. Wiltshire was married to Miss Hilda Roll.
- 12 Mr. Henry Jeffs was the speaker at the meeting of the Brotherhood at the Congregational Church, when members of the Urban District Council, the fire brigade, Epsom and Ewell V.T.C., a contingent of the East

- Surrey Regiment, and the boys from Dr. Barnardo's Homes attended. "When the lads come home; shall England be worthy of them" was the subject of the address.
- 13 The Coroner (Mr. Gilbert White) conducted an inquiry at the Court House touching the death of Pte. Samuel Oldham, of the 1st Royal Warwick Regiment, who was knocked down in High-street by a motor char-a-bane which was being used for the purpose of conveying wounded soldiers from the L.B. & S.C. Railway to the County of London war hospital. A verdict of "accidental death" was returned, and the driver of the vehicle, Pte. John Palmer, attached to the A.S.C., was exonerated from all blame.
- 21 The levying of a 3d. water rate was approved by the Urban District Council.
- 22 At a meeting of the Board of Guardians the Clerk was instructed to prepare precepts at the rate of 33/4d. in the £ for common charges for half-year ending March 31st, 1916, and further, that precepts be prepared in respect of county and police rates for the sum of £30,880 19s. 6d.
A rate of 61/2d. in the £ was declared at the meeting of the Rural District Council in respect of the maintenance and repairs of the district roads, sanitary purposes and establishment charges for the ensuing half-year.
- 26 The Epsom Special Constables were inspected by Col. Reay (Inspector-General of Divisions) on the Town Cricket Ground, and he commented on the particularly smart appearance of the men. He also spoke of the duties which the constables might be called upon to do by the War Office.
- 27 The Rev. Father T. Morrissey was presented with a cheque for £325 by residents of Epsom and friends in the district upon it being announced that he was relinquishing the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Joseph's, where he has faithfully ministered for the past 31 years.
During shunting operations at the L.B. & S.C. Railway Station an accident

occurred which resulted in the smashing of two horse boxes, damage to platform and support of roof. Two horses which were in the boxes had a narrow escape.

Mr. F. Maddison (ex-M.P. for Burnley) addresses members of the Epsom Co-operative Society upon

"The War and International Co-operation." Mr. J. C. Ottaway (President) occupied the chair, and there was an interesting discussion.

- 30 Lady Holland, of Wimbledon, presented the prizes to the successful students at the evening classes held in connection with the Technical Institute. Excellent reports were presented by Mr. C. Elworthy and Miss Foster, and some excellent words of advice were uttered to the students by the Rev. J. W. Barton, Headmaster of Epsom College.

OCTOBER

- 4 Sir Thomas Bucknill, formerly of the King's Bench Division, passed away at his residence, Woodcote Lodge, Epsom, in his 71st year. Sir Thomas had resided in the town for more than 30 years, and was connected with everything which promoted the welfare of Epsom. At the Petty Sessions the Chairman (Mr. B. Braithwaite) paid an apt-tribute to the late Judge, who was a member of the Bench.
- 5 At a meeting of the Urban District Council the following resolution was passed:- "That application be made to the Local Government Board for the sanction to borrow the sum of £1,000 for the purchase of a motor fire engine, the sum to be repaid within a period of ten years from the date of borrowing." Mr Beams strongly opposed the procedure, being of opinion that the expenditure was not absolutely necessary, and ought not to be incurred whilst the country was at war and fighting for its very existence as a nation.
- 6 Sir Thomas Bucknill was buried at Epsom Cemetery. The Parish Church was packed, and amongst the

congregation were representatives of the legal world, Freemasonry, sporting and political clubs. The first portion of the service was conducted by the Vicar of Epsom, and the committal sentences were read by the Rector of Sutton. There was a large number of beautiful wreaths.

The annual meeting of the Epsom District licensed Victuallers' association was held at Sutton. Mr. George Brown presiding. Mr. H. P. Cooper was elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

- 22 The annual meeting of the Charitable relief Committee was held at the offices of the Urban District Council. The statement of accounts showed a falling off in receipts of £41 13s. 8d.; the balance in hand, £5 8s. 11d., was the smallest on record.

At the Surrey Quarter Sessions the Epsom Grand Stand Association appealed against the poor rate for Epsom. It was stated by Mr. Cecil Whiteley, for appellants, that the parties had arrived at the settlement, and the appeal by agreement was allowed, with no costs on either side.

- 28 The inaugural meeting of the winter session of the Literary and Scientific Society was held at the Public Hall, when Mr Godfrey gave an interesting lecture, illustrated by numerous lantern views, entitled "In and out of Germany since the war: My escape from Ruhleben."

NOVEMBER

- 2 A fire which broke out at Roehampton, Links-road, the residence of Mr. Owen F. Johnson, resulted in the complete destruction of the roof of two attics and considerable damage to furniture in the rooms.

- 3 At a meeting of the Epsom tradesman and shopkeepers, Mr. W. H. Absalom presiding, it was resolved "That shops should be closed at 7 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays." A suggestion made by Mr. J. H. Birch that premises might be closed for an hour during the middle of the day was also considered, and in view of

opposition from certain tradesman who considered much inconvenience would be caused them in its adoption, it was left to the consideration of a committee.

A protest against the untaxed profits of co-operative societies was registered at a meeting of the tradesman and a resolution calling attention to the great disadvantages under which ordinary tradesman laboured was passed. The facts were communicated to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. McKenna) and Mr. H. Keswick, M.P.

- 4 The 25th report presented at the annual meeting of the Conservative Club recorded the death of two Vice-Presidents, the Rev. E. W. Northey and Mr. A. E. Harter. In billiards, it was stated, the Aston Challenge Shield was retained by the successful efforts of the club team consisting of Messrs. Golds, Hooker, Hicks, Pearman, Bird and Whitehouse, who were very efficiently captained by Mr F. A. Duplock.

- 8 Death of Mr. James Andrews, printer and stationer of High-street, who was associated with a number of movements in the town.

Marriage of Lieut. S. E. Charlton, of the 3/18th London Irish Rifles, and Miss Kathleen Woolnough at the Parish Church.

Mr. F. S. Rose, of Sutton, presented a petition to the magistrates on behalf of the Epsom Licensed Victuallers and Beersellers' Protection Society. It asked that the Justices would forbear the imposition of any compensation levy for the county for the year 1916.

- 11 Mr. Frederic Coleman, F.R.G.S., gave a lecture at the literary society entitled "Ten months on Active Service."

- 14 Members of the Fire Brigade, the V.T.C., and Urban Council attended a special service for men at the Parish Church on the occasion of the anniversary of the dedication of the building.

- 16 At a meeting of the Urban Council a communication was received from the Local Government Board that they could not see their way to sanction the application to borrow £1,000 for the

- purpose of purchasing a motor fire engine.
- 18 Inquest on Henry Sherman, aged 62 years, of no fixed abode, found in a dying condition in a loft at the rear of the Railway Hotel, Station road.
- 20 Military inter-battalion cross-country team race on the Downs. The distance was five miles, and the winners were the 3rd Irish Guards.
Death of Mr. Frederick Herbert, aged 52 years, of 33, Adelphi-road. He was a member of the Fire Brigade for over 10 years.
The Bishop of Winchester (Dr. Talbot) conducted a confirmation at the College.
- 24 A sale of work was opened at the Wesleyan Church, on behalf of the Building Fund, by Miss Kathleen Rank, of Kingswood Warren. Over £200 was realised.
Epsom Fire Brigade attended the funeral of Fireman Herbert at Ewell.
- 26 Pte. G Walker, of the 6th Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, who died at the County of London Hospital, was buried at Epsom cemetery with military honours. Deceased was one of the soldiers rescued from the sunken hospital ship "Anglia".
- 27 Death of Mr. George Vassilas at the Worple Temperance Hotel. In his younger days he was a prominent cricketer, and was recognised as a very fast bowler.
- 29 Lieut. H. Chamberlain, R.N., gave a short talk on the war at the Liberal Club.

DECEMBER

- 1 Death of Mrs. A. W. Gordon, of The Flint House, College-road. She was an ardent worker on behalf of the Parish Church.
- 6 Visit of Mrs. Parker, Lord Kitchener's sister, and Lady Reid, wife of Australia's High Commissioner, to Woodcote Convalescent Camp.
- 9 Annual share-out in connection with the Ebbisham Tradesmen's Benefit Club. One hundred and seventy-eight members received £2 9s. 9d. each.

- 14 The Bishop of Guildford conducted a confirmation service at the Parish Church. Candidates numbered 70.
Christmas greetings were conveyed to the Urban Council through Mr. C. Cropley from Provost Sergeant Ede, a member on active service in France.
The Urban Council received a deputation from the Epsom and District Trades and Labour Council, and decided to allow them to be represented on the tribunal.
- 21 The marriage took place at Christ Church, the vicar (the Rev. H. A. Bowles) officiating, of Miss Cicely Gertrude Bowles and Lieut. Francis Henry Saunders, of the Northamptonshire Regiment.
Presentation at Benhilton Schools, Sutton, to Mr. H. E. Baker upon his leaving to take up the position of organist and choirmaster at Epsom Parish Church.
- 25 Sir Henry and Lady Craik visited the Convalescent Camp, Woodcote Park.
- 26 Annual competitions of the Epsom and District rifle Club at the Drill Hall. Teams representative of Epsom, Ashted and Leatherhead Volunteer Training Corps took part.
Mr. E. C. Birch, organist and choirmaster at the Parish Church, left Epsom for Portsmouth, where he had been appointed to a similar position at the church of St Mark. His successor, Mr. H. E. Baker commenced duties.