

Local Stories

Part eleven; December 1921



Katie Heaton 08/12/2021 14:13:31



Pondering over what to write about this month, a colleague suggested looking at Poole and life in the town 100 years ago. The Poole and Dorset Herald on 15th December 1921 describes a shopping tour of the town:

"The shops and stores this year appear to be stocked better than they have been since the last bright Christmas of 1913 and presents and the like are in endless variety. Rich and poor, young and old, male and female, are all catered for in the town. A short walk along the main thoroughfare will reveal wonders."

"Butler's is essentially the Mecca of the children. They can be seen already gazing longingly into the huge island windows which abound with toys arranged in a seasonable setting. Their mothers and grown sisters are also well catered for by an extensive array of millinery. Butler's is another house that has stamped its name deeply in the town and built up for itself a reputation that would be hard to beat. Most attractive and useful presents for gentlemen are to be purchased at Mr J. F. Tydeman's attractive establishment a little further down the town. Fur lined gloves are to be obtained at most reasonable prices. Velours are present in many shades and varieties, while warm and comfortable overcoats make appropriate gifts."

The Amity Hall on the High Street was showing the latest Tarzan film- The Return of Tarzan and "a pleasant and well-played comedy, The Sins of St Anthony." Meanwhile at the Electric Theatre you could see "the most thrilling of all mystery stories- Haunting Shadows" or "a remarkable drama of a woman's indecision- The Little Lady of the Big House."

In the news we find out that two women were appointed as magistrates in Poole. The Bournemouth Guardian reads:

"The appointment of three new magistrates for the Borough of Poole is announced, two of them

Recent posts

- [Part eleven; December 1921](#)
- [Part ten; The Way We See Wartime – Man the Carer](#)
- [Part nine; Americans in Dorset 1943-44](#)
- [Part eight; The Martell Family](#)
- [Part seven; Florence Chant, Photographer](#)
- [Part Six; Unearthed. Gypsy and Traveller Heritage in Poole](#)
- [Part Five; Crown Dorset Art Pottery](#)
- [Part Four: Poole Lifeboat's First Coxswain, Richard Sutton Stokes](#)
- [Part Three: The Briggs Sisters](#)
- [Part Two; Mary Butts](#)
- [Part one; an assortment of tales](#)

Posts by Date

- [December 2021](#)
 - [Part eleven; December 1921](#)
- [November 2021](#)
- [October 2021](#)
- [September 2021](#)
- [August 2021](#)
- [June 2021](#)
- [May 2021](#)
- [April 2021](#)
- [March 2021](#)
- [February 2021](#)
- [January 2021](#)

The appointment of three new magistrates for the Borough of Poole is announced, two of them being ladies- the first to receive that honour at Poole. They are Mrs Reginald Fawkes, Mrs Edith Cloutman and Dr George S. Small. So numerous are the activities of Mrs Fawkes, wife of the Rev R. Fawkes, that they cannot be fully detailed. Both Mr and Mrs Fawkes, who reside at Parkstone House, Parkstone Road, have been among the most prominent supporters of the Guild of Help and other enterprises. Mrs Cloutman, a Labour party nominee, is a good worker upon the Board of Guardians. Her quiet, practical wisdom and sane judgment will be of value on the Bench, as will her sympathy with the unfortunate."

The Poole and Dorset Herald also featured the appointment and reported:

"I think it is a very wise thing for the law to allow ladies to sit on the Bench with us" said Lieut-Colonel F. G. Wheatley, J.P., at the Poole Police Court on Thursday in welcoming to the Bench Mrs Edith Cloutman, of Redruth, Curtis Road, Upper Parkstone, one of the newly appointed magistrates for the borough. Judging from the public duties she had performed in the past he was sure she would be of great service, especially in dealing with cases in which women and children were involved."

The newspapers from 100 years ago convey a sense of optimism and pride in the town. From the variety and abundance of goods in the shops, to the choice of films and onto Edith Cloutman and Elizabeth Mary Fawkes trailblazing to join previously male only spheres of public life, the overriding feeling is that of hopefulness and promise.

Image of High Street towards Level Crossing. Shops include Butlers and Tydemans. Street lamp. Photographer Laxton Blinkhorn From the collection of Poole Museum Service

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