

# 9 Bettys



Bettys moved into their present Harrogate premises in Parliament Street in 1976 from their original Cambridge Crescent premises, occupied by them since first opening in 1919.

The Bettys business has its origin in the 1907 arrival in Yorkshire of Fritz Buetzer, the twenty-two-year-old son of a Swiss master baker with great ambitions to become a chocolatier. After gaining experience, he moved to Harrogate in 1919, where he opened a beautifully fitted-out cafe on 17 July at Cambridge Crescent, changing his name to Frederick Belmont. The new cafe was called "Bettys", which rapidly became popular, but to this day, mystery surrounds the origin of the Bettys name.

Bettys' Parliament Street building dates from 1899-1900, and for well over a century has provided Parliament Street with one of its most attractive structures. The first occupant was the Cafe Ophir, but when the business was acquired in 1905 by the famous tea buyer, C. E. Taylors, the name changed to the Cafe Imperial, which became one of Harrogate's most celebrated businesses. This was acquired by Bettys in 1962 and in the following decade, the

Cafe Imperial was closed, and in 1976 Bettys moved from their old Cambridge Crescent address into the refurbished premises of the former Cafe Imperial, at the corner of Parliament Street and Montpellier Parade.

It was natural for such a successful business to consider opening other shops, and these were introduced to Bradford, Leeds and York, with further branches opening at Ilkley and Northallerton. In Harrogate, a second outlet was opened at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden at Harlow Carr, which again has enjoyed excellent levels of patronage. Much of the work of provisioning these cafes, whose customers have come to expect the highest of standards, is done at Bettys Bakery at Starbeck. The first Starbeck bakery opened in 1922, but in 2000, this was replaced by a splendid new bakery, whose architecture – in a nice touch - showed unmistakable references to the founder's Swiss origin.

