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Berkshire Family Historian

for family historians in the Royal County of Berkshire

September 2006

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Chairman's report to the AGM

The past year has been marked with several very successful events, which started with the society's 30th anniversary conference taking place at Theale. This was a very well attended full-day event with a good selection of speakers and exhibitors. Its success was broadly due to the good organisation of Jean Herbert and her team of volunteers.

The society, in conjunction with the Berkshire Record Office and BBC Radio Berkshire, ran three very successful *Who Do You Think You Are* events in Reading, Wokingham and Newbury in mid-February. They were all very well attended with both experienced family researchers and also newcomers to the hobby. The Research Centre hosted a follow-up event three weeks later, which was also very well attended.

We have developed much closer ties with the Berkshire Record Office, which has advantages for both. Their staff have been given a guided tour of the Research Centre and made aware of what we hold and what we can do to assist people in their search for information. The physical location of our Research Centre is unequalled elsewhere in the country, in that we have the Berkshire Record Office and the Register Office both within 25 yards. Those studying local families can be shown what they have to do and how to do it in the Research Centre, walk to the BRO to check the records, and then walk to the Register Office for their certificates: a one-stop facility.

We were operating without a secretary for quite a while but we now have a very capable person in Tom James. He brings to the society a wealth of experience in procedures and committees as well as many other attributes which are needed by a society.

Our search for a replacement editor also took much longer than was envisaged, but again we have an extremely capable person in Penny Stokes. This is well illustrated by the recent superb June issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian*.

The Research Centre is as our members are aware staffed by a band of very capable volunteers. The person now organising the roster and looking after them is Arthur Beech. He is striving to improve the way the roster is presented and to this end we will have on our website the full roster available, to enable our Research Centre assistants to see if they can fill vacant dates. Arthur is also organising other facilities or assistance that can be provided to lessen their workload and provide better assistance to our visitors. Not many non-member visitors to the Research Centre realise that those people assisting them are all volunteers, and that without them giving freely of their time and services the centre certainly could not be open for as long as it is during the week. I would like to express my thanks to all of these Research Centre assistants.

Nigel Saltmarsh
chairman 2005-06

Balance sheet at 30 April 2006

	2005 £	2006 £
fixed assets		
tangible assets	13,050	18,329
total fixed assets	13,050	18,329
current assets		
debtors	1,211	3,695
cash at bank	42,173	31,236
total current assets	43,384	34,931
current liabilities		
owed to BFH Enterprises Ltd	(1,570)	
total assets less liabilities	54,864	53,260
surplus carried forward	54,864	53,260

The society's executive committee for 2006-07

chairman Jocie McBride*
treasurer Sue Clifford*
secretary Tom James*

Carolyn Boulton*
 Cliff Debney*

ex-officio members

Derek Trinder
 Peter Francis
 Phil Wood
 John Price
 Sue Matthews*
 Valerie Batt-Rawden

* denotes those elected to the committee for the first time in 2006

Have you renewed your sub?

It would seem that the hot summer has made some members a tad forgetful, and our membership secretary Bob Plumridge urges those who have not yet done so to renew their subscriptions to the society for 2006-07.

Subscriptions fell due at the end of June, which is the end of the society's financial year. Renewal forms were sent out with the June issue (on the back of the address sheet) but it seems that quite a few of these were overlooked.

If you have not yet renewed, you should have received a reminder with this issue of the magazine. If that piece of paper too has fallen by the wayside, then renew on the website or download a renewal form or email a request to memsec@berksfhs.org.uk.

Sad to say, this is your last reminder and, if your renewal is not received soon, this will be your last copy of the *Berkshire Family Historian*.

Two volunteers needed

With Jocie McBride's move into the society's chair, the role of **publications manager** falls vacant. The committee is looking for someone to take on the task of bringing out the society's own books and CDs. A stock control program will be provided, and the work can be done at home. You will not have to burn CDs, and you will not have to sell anything, but administrative skills would be needed.

An **assistant for the publications department** is also being sought. Moderate computer skills would be needed to process data sent in by the projects team. This too can be done at home.

Anyone who feels capable of taking on either of these tasks should contact Jocie publications@berksfhs.org.uk for more information.

Additions to the society's library

2nd Royal Berkshire Regiment in WW1
 Aldermaston monumental inscriptions
 Around Tadley – 3 titles
 Battle Workhouse and Hospital 1867-2005
 Berkshire poll book 1727
 British in India
 Dating twentieth-century photographs
 Dictionary of English place names
 Early newspaper press in Berkshire 1723-1855

Gazetteer of the British Isles
 Hampshire baptism index 1831-41
 Indexes to Army of Reserve 1803 vols 1-6
 Pangbourne – an illustrated history
 Reading and District Congregational births, marriages and deaths
 Regimental indexes 1806 vols 1-11
 Theale war memorial

Berkshire Burial Index *update*

The parishes and periods which have been added to the Berkshire Burial Index since the position shown in the December 2005/March 2006 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are set out below. The index now contains more than 447,000 entries.

Abingdon Baptist (Lower Meeting House, Ock St)	1786 - 1837
Abingdon Congregational (Upper Meeting House)	1730 - 1740
Aston Tirrold Independent	1763 - 1837
Blewbury St Michael	1588 - 1674 and 1754 - 1812
Bracknell Independent (Congregational)	1822 - 1859
Cholsey St Mary	1813 - 1874 and 1929 - 1953
Clewer St Andrew	1856 - 1869
Cookham Dean St John the Baptist	1845 - 1973
Denchworth St James	1538 - 1635
East Ilsley St Mary	2000 - 2005
Great Coxwell St Giles	1941 - 2002
Hungerford St Lawrence	1559 - 1700, 1813 - 1846 and 1865 - 1875
Longcot St Mary the Virgin	1884 - 1993
North Moreton All Saints	1813 - 1880
Old Windsor Ss Peter & Andrew	1813 - 1873 and 1919 - 1940
Pangbourne St James the Less	1559 - 1678
Reading London Road Cemetery (burials in consecrated ground)	1859 - 1863 and 1866 - 1868
Reading St Giles	1836 - 1840
Speenhamland St Mary	1953 - 1971
Thatcham St Mary	1750 - 1770
Tilehurst St Michael	1630 - 1716
Uffington St Mary	1836 - 1856
Wallingford Baptist	1796 - 1837
Wallingford Independent	1814 - 1836
Wallingford St Mary the More	1796 - 1854, 1871 - 1939 and 1961 - 1976
Wallingford St Peter	1813 - 1862
Wantage Ss Peter & Paul	1870 - 1877 and 1902 - 1918

Details of the facilities for researching burials in the Berkshire Burial Index are given on pages 34-35.

Military records 1656 to 1994

1837online now claims to hold the largest online archive of military records, with the addition of such datasets as soldiers who died 1914-18, national roll of the First World War, Army roll of honour 1939-45, Forces' BMD 1761-1994 and other Army rolls including the India army and the Civil Service List.

The new datasets cover many support staff not previously featured in war records: nurses, doctors and cooks may now be traced. A total of 38 different databases can now be accessed in one search, covering 1656-1994.

The site also offers commemorative scrolls, replicating the official certificates given to families of soldiers who died in the First World War.

Online access to manorial documents

BRO, together with the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and Royal Holloway College, has been awarded £10,000 by the Marc Fitch fund towards a 15-month project to produce an online index to the manorial documents register for both counties.

The register is a list of court rolls, accounts, rentals and surveys of manors which are held both in public institutions and private hands. Currently it is kept by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts as a hard copy only. The Berkshire and Buckinghamshire project will see the register remodelled as web pages searchable by manor, parish and date.

Sarah Charlton has been recruited as Project Officer and she began work in February.

To see how the finished product will look, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr.

To receive the electronic version of *The Berkshire Echo*, the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Record Office, send an email to arch@reading.gov.uk.

Teachers' roll call

British Origins has added to its datasets the Teachers Registrations, a list of over 100,000 people (more than half of whom were women) who taught in England and Wales between 1870 and 1947.

From 1914 many teachers in England and Wales (and elsewhere) registered with the Teachers Registration Council. The original records for up to 1947 (after which registration was abandoned) were deposited with the Society of Genealogists. These have now been scanned and indexed to make them available to the public for the first time.

Registration of new teachers began in 1914, but existing teachers also joined the register. Coverage is therefore effectively from 1870.

The records provide teacher's name (and for married women often their maiden name as well), date of registration, register number, professional address, attainments, training and experience.

For full details visit:

www.originsnetwork.com/help/popup-aboutbo-teachers2.htm

Newbury in the County of Berks April 23 1748

WHEREAS the Small-Pox during the last Summer raged violently in Newbury, and we are informed many people are deterred from coming to this Town from Apprehensions of the said Distemper being still here, we the Mayor, Justice, Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, whose Names are here subscribed, do hereby assure the Public, that we have not any one Person in cure of the said Distemper, nor do we know of any one who is ill of the same in the said Town.

Lawrence Head, Mayor
Giles Townsend, Justice
Thomas Hulbert, M.D.
John Coller, M.D.

Surgeons
Lipyeat Bodman
Edward Philips
John Brunsdon
Tobias Butler

Apothecaries
Edward Withers
Ebenezer King
Richard Golding
Richard Marrine
Thomas Golding

Transcribed from *The Oxford Gazette and Reading Mercury* Monday 16 May 1748
by Debbie Kennett (5278)

Censuses to move to Kew

The National Archives (TNA) has announced its intention to move its holdings and services presently housed at the Family Records Centre (FRC) to the TNA base at Kew by the end of 2008.

The Family Records Centre (FRC) is jointly run by the the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and TNA in Myddelton Street, Islington, providing access to some of the most important sources for family history research in England and Wales. The centre currently holds the TNA's published census returns and the ONS birth, marriage and death registrations.

Peter Murphy, director of registration services at ONS said: "The hard copy indexes of birth, death and marriage registration, which are available at the FRC, remain for now the resource enabling the Registrar General to meet her statutory obligation to make indexes available to the public."

The ONS has an extensive project in hand to digitise registration records, but it has not yet made data and documents available

online to the same extent as TNA. Over the coming months the ONS will be reviewing its future requirements for services at FRC in the light of this project and TNA's plans to relocate to Kew.

Following expressions of concern from the Federation of Family History Societies and the Society of Genealogists, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, the minister responsible, has invited representatives from major family history groups to a workshop at Kew in September to discuss future service provision.

Opinion within the Berks FHS discussion group appears to be divided on the move. Some members consider Kew to be more easily accessible than central London, but others deplore the separation of TNA archives from London Metropolitan Archives and the Society of Genealogists, both of which are located within walking distance of Myddelton Street. However the July issue of the FRC newsletter describes the move as an "operational necessity", irrespective of public opinion.

Dates for your diary			
<i>date</i>	<i>event</i>	<i>venue</i>	<i>more details</i>
Sat 23 Sep	FRC with Families in British India Society one day conference	FRC, 1 Myddelton Street London EC1R 1UW	£5 0208 392 5300
10.00-16.00 Sun 24 Sep	Hampshire Genealogical Society open day	Horndean Technology College Barton Cross, Horndean	< www.hgs-online.org.uk/events2006.htm >
10.00-16.00 Sun 1 Oct	West Middlesex FHS open day	White House Community Centre, 45 The Avenue, Hampton	< www.west-middlesexfhs.org.uk/ >
10.00-16.00 Sat 21 Oct	Oxfordshire FHS open day	Exeter Hall Kidlington	< www.ofhs.org.uk/OpenDay.html >
10.00-16.30 Sat 4 Nov	West Surrey FHS open day	Woking Leisure Centre Kingfield Rd, Woking	01483 518737 < www.wsfhs.org/OpenDay.htm >

Honing your FH skills

There has never been a wider choice of study options for family historians looking to extend their expertise.

The society's autumn course of evening classes on family history is now full, but details of the next course, planned for spring 2007, are shown below.

For those who prefer distance learning the Open University runs a short online course entitled *Starting writing family history*. This is a 12-week module costing £135 and carrying 10 CAT points. Registration for the next course, beginning in November 2006, closes 21 September. If you miss that date there is another course starting February 2007. <www.open.ac.uk/courses>

The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS) runs a much longer correspondence/online course in genealogy, aimed at beginners and at those preparing for professional genealogical practice. The course consists of 24 lecture modules and assignments. Two hours' study a week is the recommended minimum, and the course takes at least three years. The cost for UK students is £1,980. <www.ihgs.ac.uk/courses/correspondence>

The Society of Genealogists (SoG) offers a £150 15-week course of Thursday evening classes on FH skills at the society's London address. The next begins 7 September. For those who already have basic FH skills there are several specific subject options. The SoG calendar lists a variety of one- and half-day courses on Saturdays. The cost is usually £15 for half-days and £25 for full days (discounted for members). Topics scheduled during October and November include wills, FH software, online FH, Latin and palaeography. <www.sog.org.uk/events/calendar.shtml>

The National Archives offers two interactive online tutorials: one in Latin for historical documents, and the other in palaeography. No previous experience is required for either, and study is taken at your own pace. <www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

Pharos Teaching and Tutoring is an online FH training organisation run from London and Canada. The courses currently on offer are £42-£50 each. <www.pharostutors.com>

Please note that these details are based on published information, not direct experience. Neither the editor nor the society is in a position to recommend any course other than the Berks FHS' own course advertised below.

Berkshire Family History Society

5-week course of evening classes in family history

at Berks FHS, Yeomanry House, Castle Hill, Reading

beginners and intermediate

explanation by demonstration and examples

guidance on accessing archive material

use of various media and equipment

advice on sourcing material

small groups

£25 per person

Mondays 19.00-21.30

Branch lines

In the first of a new series Derek Trinder, who chairs the Bracknell and Wokingham branch, extols the benefits of active branch membership.

Aren't family historians in Berkshire lucky? No matter where you live in the Royal County, in an hour or less you can comfortably reach every meeting held by the society's six branches.

To readers in Aberdeen or Australia this may rarely be of consequence, but should any of you ever be this way on the third Friday evening of the month, do come and see us at Priestwood. You will always be very welcome. To date, two members from Lincolnshire hold the furthest travelled claim, but such records exist to be broken.

From the society's membership of 2,000, around 60 people regularly support the branch meetings at Priestwood Community Centre in Bracknell. Half of that number come to almost every meeting, and at some point in any year a further 100 society members and visitors will turn up to one or more meetings.

A conservative estimate finds that another 350 members live in the Bracknell and Wokingham area. They pay their subscriptions, and they receive an excellent magazine, but they miss out on the membership benefit of everything that a branch can offer to an enthusiastic family historian. Should you be one among this invisible majority, just what are you missing?

Glance inside the back page of this magazine and you will find all the details about forthcoming meetings. Why do these particular topics feature? Each year branch members return a brief questionnaire on things they would most like to hear about and to do. Such feedback means that meetings and other activities can be tailored to reflect those needs expressed. Sandra, our programme secretary, aims to secure a good mix of speakers, ranging from recognised celebrities of the family history world to new faces, each one an authority in his or her particular area.

You get a great deal more from a meeting than a talk and some questions when you arrive in good time (which guarantees a space in the car

park). As you sign in, pick up your monthly newsletter and other handouts, such as *Useful Websites*. Your next stop could be the branch library. Is there a book you want to borrow? Or do you need some information from the librarians, Ann and Gillian? Don't forget the magazine exchange scheme, where Brian has recent issues from more than 80 family history societies available for short-term loan. Take a look at the displays: one on branch and local news, the other linked to the theme of the evening. Are there any leaflets you need on archives or other family history matters amongst the wide selection available? Check out the databases of surname and county interests (you probably have interests beyond Berkshire too). Does anyone share your interests? These two databases have provided some valuable matches, including two family members, previously unknown to each other, who united their individual halves of their pedigree. With interests declared across 44 British and Irish counties, small groups of members can now share their breakthroughs and brick walls far beyond Berkshire's boundaries. There are also research offers forthcoming when people plan visits to distant archives. Newcomers and old hands whose research is stuck may try the Help Desk. One or more of Nicky, Arthur, Sandra and the branch chairman can generally offer useful advice.

Branches provide much more than just a monthly meeting. Bracknell and Wokingham members are completing a local project to record and publish memorial inscriptions from the churchyard at All Saints, Wokingham. You could join our trips to places like the Research Centre, The National Archives and the British Newspaper Library. Reflecting your society's objectives to advance public education in family history and genealogy, you will also discover flourishing branch links with local groups and

organisations. One example is a successful series of public events staged jointly with Wokingham Library, with more in prospect this autumn. A Family History Surgery in February 2006 attracted more than 100 visitors to Wokingham, some of whom travelled from as far afield as Basingstoke and West London to get advice.

The key to a thriving branch rests in the hands of its regular supporters. Bracknell and Wokingham is fortunate in having a substantial core of members who regularly volunteer their support for branch and society initiatives. That kind of support is vital and very much valued.

Without it both branch and society would be altogether poorer.

So, to all you lucky Berkshire family historians out there, shall we see you at this autumn's branch meetings? What could be better than chatting with other members who share your interests? You can be sure of a friendly welcome and, you never know, you might find an added dimension to your research.

The editor would welcome contributions from other branches for this series.

A spot of luck in exchange magazines

Daphne Spurling

Slave trading. We did not expect that running the Exchange Magazine Library would lead us into such murky waters.

In common with most members, we have ancestors in many counties. On joining the Berks FHS, the exchange magazine library was our first port of call at the Reading Branch meetings as we looked for people and places associated with our families. Unearthing more forebears increased the number of counties, names or themes to research. Rather than see the exchange magazine library close a few years ago, Andrew and I offered to take it over. The opportunity to scan the magazines as they arrive is too good to miss, which brings us to the article in the Sussex FHS magazine of March 2006. Our only connection with Sussex was the retirement home of Andrew's parents and a possible ancestor 300 years ago; neither justified joining Sussex FHS, nor borrowing their magazine.

The article entitled "A Spot of Luck" mentioned Henry Coward of Petworth and Jamaica. He sounded like the ancestor Andrew's great-grandfather had mentioned, in a note for his children 100 years ago, as the father-in-law of Benjamin Way, Andrew's 6 x

great-grandfather. But another source gave Samuel Lewis as Ben Way's father-in-law, and this seemed more likely as the direct ancestor, because Lewis was a common Christian name in the family for the next 200 years.

A letter to the article's author led us on a whole new line of research into shipowners and merchants trading with the West Indies, Americas and further afield, not to mention disputed wills and slave owners leaving money to train dissenting ministers. We have found that Samuel Lewis did leave his business and slaves in Jamaica to his son-in-law Benjamin Way, but by the time Samuel died two years after writing his will, the widowed Benjamin had returned to London and married the daughter of Henry Coward. Their son born two months after Samuel's death was called Lewis after his father's benefactor.

Ben Way became a merchant in London, and the owner and financier of ships involved in the slave trade. Both Samuel Lewis and Henry Coward are said to have been killed in duels, which seems too much of a coincidence, but we shall have to await another stroke of luck to find out which one.

The churching rite in Berkshire parish records 1900-1950

Margaret Houlbrooke

The rite of churching goes back to the earliest years of Christian liturgy, and is found in the Church of England Book of Common Prayer for 1549, 1552, 1662 and 1928. It was to take place after a woman's confinement, labour of childbirth, delivery, and days of lying in were completed, and it offered her an opportunity for thanksgiving. It also made sure that she was allowed to re-enter the church as a communicant (forbidden to her during the period of childbirth). She was expected to give an offering of money or, in earlier times, the baby's linen chrisom. In 1662 it was confirmed that she must be "decently appareled". Sometimes, according with Candlemas tradition, she would carry a candle.

Until she was churched the new mother had been considered by custom to be vulnerable to dark forces, and in her person unlucky to others, being still unclean and in need of purification. Her mother and grandmother, aunts and in-laws would not let her go about until she was safely done, from superstitious fear of ill-fortune, in the form maybe of an unwanted pregnancy in the family, or of the baby's failure to thrive.

This is not just ancient history. Churching continued to be celebrated until late in the twentieth century, even after the Alternative Service Book

of 1980 replaced it with a much simpler service of Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child. To uncover the local picture Berkshire's parish records were consulted, and from Registers of Services and occasional Vicars' Fee Books, the following list was compiled. It shows the parishes whose records of churchings have survived. The ceremony is known to have gone on in many other churches, but only from oral testimony.

These sources generally record churching dates, and often the amount given as an offering, which may be anywhere from 3d to £1. Some parishes (here indicated by asterisks) also noted the names of women who were churched. This is of great value, for names can lead on to other details. If they can be matched with those in census and baptismal records, pictures of these women's family backgrounds may be built up, with kinsfolk and numbers of children, as well as place of residence, neighbours, and husband's occupation. Another valuable source is the baptism register, which gives dates of birth as well as baptism, making it possible to see how women fitted in churchings between, or alongside, these two events, and with the passage of time, how far births came to be followed by baptism only, no longer by churching.

Dates of recorded churchings in 29 Berkshire parishes

*Ardington, Holy Trinity, 1899-1911
Ascot Heath, All Saints, 1921-23
*Bear Wood, St Catherine, 1899-1906
Brightwalton, All Saints, 1881-1932
Burghfield Common, Mission Church, 1913-32
Caversham, St Peter, 1900-07
*East Challow, St Nicholas, 1900-07
East Garston, All Saints, 1901-10
Enborne, St Michael, 1908-25
Hinton Waldrist, St Margaret, 1915-25
Hungerford, St Lawrence, 1895-1901
*Lockinge, All Saints, 1927-50
*Newtown, St Mary, 1902-24
*Radley, St James, 1898-1928

*Reading, St Mary, 1916-26
*Reading, St Stephen, 1919-42
*Sandhurst, St Michael, 1905-45
*Shellingford, St Faith, 1888-1938
*Shrivenham, St Andrew, 1907-31
Sonning, St Andrew, 1839-1870
South Moreton, St John the Baptist, 1918-20
*Wantage, Ss. Peter & Paul, 1898-1921
Wargrave, St Mary, 1915-21
Wasing, St Nicholas, 1882-1902
*West Ilsley, All Saints, 1902-17
New Windsor, St John the Evangelist, 1789-1832
Woodley, St John the Evangelist, 1889-1917
*Wootton, St Peter, 1890-1919

In addition to these essential records, conversations were conducted with current and retired clergy, and women, individually or in groups, who could remember the time in the early and mid-twentieth century when churching was a routine post-partum event. From these arose some idea of how the ceremony was regarded in past decades, and the reason why it persisted for so long in the century of secularisation and women's emancipation, both of which might have been expected to keep new mothers away from the service, with its undertones of coercion and hints about purification. Clergy had on the whole acceded to requests for churching, though often with growing unease about its theological implications.

What were the pressures behind the decision to be churched? From this research several emerged in the nature and social structure of Berkshire's villages, and in the surviving power of matriarchy in their families.

Some historians have written of the "face to face" society that prevailed in late Victorian and early twentieth-century rural communities, with little privacy and everyone knowing what was going on. Many of these asterisked churching parishes were quite small enough for such intimacy. In 1901 populations in the villages ranged in size from Shellingford's 204 souls to Shrivenham's 953. A number of current inhabitants testified to the social and economic power of major landowners until as late as 1939: the Loyd family in Ardington and Lockinge; the Walter family of Bear Wood; the Dockar Drysdales at Radley; the Hendersons of Shellingford; the Barringtons of Shrivenham. At Brightwalton the Woolley family could be added to this list, together with the Eytons of Hinton Waldrist and the Marstons of East Garston. Local parish histories confirm that at one time Lady Wantage, Lady Walter, Lady Barrington and Mrs Dockar Drysdale all took great personal interest in the family lives of the estate; the register of the Rev Henry Howard of Brightwalton pays tribute to Lady Woolley's tireless help overseeing parish social events.

Powerful parsons might be equally influential in matters such as churching: the well-connected Hon Randall Parsons, son of Henry Parsons of

Sandhurst; the Hon Maurice Ponsonby of Wantage; the long-serving Edward Hill of Shrivenham; the sternly evangelical Henry Sanders of East Challow, and vigorous Canon Winter of Wargrave, who saw to it that his church was rebuilt within a year after it was burned down in 1914. Several Berkshire incumbents were in place for three or four decades. In Wantage, the imposing figures of the sisters of St Mary's Convent will certainly have added particular pressure. Their names appear quite often as godmothers to the children of Ss Peter and Paul. Under supervision of squire and parson, women of all classes, but particularly those married to labourers, artisans, chauffeurs and gardeners, who were both employees and tenants, could scarcely escape the requirement that, as well as attend church at least twice on Sundays, they be churched after childbirth.

The pressure of female relatives was probably even stronger than that of employers, landowners or clergy. Surveys of surnames reveal many families staying put in the same parishes for generations, and oral evidence confirms that churching was frequently undertaken at the behest (or insistence) above all of mothers and mothers-in-law living in the neighbourhood. Women have remembered, "My mother said I should," or "We'd always been to church, it was a thanksgiving for bringing new life and that everything went OK." Others however recalled that they had been "annoyed and upset" at the remote solemnity of the service, and at least one had objected to "that reflection on you of the fact that you're dirty and have got to be purified after having a child." But though it was sometimes contentious, evidence stands that 60 or 70 years ago this was a rite regularly attended. Offerings were made of quite large sums such as 6d, 1s or 2s, which must have been hard to find from the wages of a labouring man. Some long journeys were accomplished, through the Vale or over the Downs, as well as shorter walks within towns or the closeness of small villages.

Two further lines of information give the range of women's class and economic background. These are husband's occupation, and size of offering. For example, at Holy Trinity, Ardington, the vicar's wife, Mrs F G Gillmor, set an example

with two churchings, in 1899 and 1901, giving an offering of 10s at the second. Mrs Taylor, who tendered 2s, was married to an engineer. Two shillings and sixpence was given by wives of both a machinist and the innkeeper at the Boar's Head. Other new mothers married to labourers, gardeners, painters, plate-layers and coachmen offered just 6d or 3d.

In other parishes too there were only occasionally larger fees. Two Radley mothers, Mrs Josephine Dockar Drysdale, who had bought the manor of Radley in 1901, gave 10s at her churching in May 1910, and Mrs Norton, a solicitor's wife, paid the same sum each time she was churching in 1903 and 1906. At St Peter's, Wootton two farmers' wives gave payments of 5s, and Mary Hartley, married to a "BA, Oxon", twice offered 10s. However, the size of offerings does not necessarily reflect family income. The records of most villages show that a local standard amount of 6d or 1s was given by wives no matter what their husbands earned, be they skilled

artisan or unskilled labourer, carter or teacher, gardener or bank manager. Despite the burden on the budgets of its low-paid families, a high standard 1s was paid by almost all wives at St Stephen's, Reading.

So it was that women from all walks of life made the decision to be churching, driven by the encouragement (or sharp words) of their own mothers and female kin, the expectation of neighbours and employers, and the habit of obedience to the parson, deference to the squire. A whole culture of duty was woven into the daily lives of women, and guided their decisions.

What interest may this investigation have for family historians? Churching can surely take its place among the discoveries that illuminate a woman's life story, perhaps adding to understanding of the obligations that she faced, her turn of mind, her independence as she questioned what may have seemed an oppressive demand, or the level of her commitment to religion, mother and community as she went along to be churching.

Wargrave

a parish portrait

Peter Delaney

Wargrave is a Thames-side village, essentially rural in character and with a long history. The first documentary evidence of its existence occurs in a charter dated 1061 of Edward the Confessor, which mentions a late tenth-century grant "to the Old Minster of Winchester" (the Bishop of Winchester). Although the authenticity of this document is questionable, the village certainly existed by that time. The Domesday survey, completed in 1086, refers to the manor of Wargrave as belonging to the King, and that before 1066 it had belonged to Queen Edith, the wife of Edward the Confessor. At the time of Domesday, Wargrave's 5,000 acres had a population of about 250. The land was worked by 29 ploughs, the mill rendered 9s 2d, and there were three fisheries on the river (eel traps at weirs, producing about 3,000 eels a year). Valued at £27 6s 8d, Wargrave was one of the richest and most populous places in east Berkshire.

At that time, Windsor Forest came as far as the River Thames at Wargrave. The weirs on the river were surrounded by groves (areas of woodland), and this is most likely the origin of the village name, written *Weregreave* on early documents.

The church is first mentioned in a document of 1121, when Henry I gave it to Reading Abbey. Soon after, a stone structure was erected, and the oldest part of the present building, the north wall, is probably part of that early church. The present tower dates from 1635, whilst the building was altered in 1817 and 1849. Apart from the tower and north wall, however, most of the present building dates from the rebuilding following a fire, which was discovered in the early hours of Whit Monday 1914. The diocesan architect reported that the fire had begun in several places in the church, and it was strongly rumoured, although not proven, that the fire was caused by suffragettes. The flames were so fierce that all the



Wargrave Church in 1861

timber was destroyed, and much of the stonework made unsafe by the heat, so that the aisle pillars and south wall had to be replaced. Many memorials and the stained glass windows were also destroyed. The tower acted like a chimney, destroying the timber, clock and the six bells dating from 1668-88.

The opportunity was taken to extend the church by one bay at the eastern end, and the rebuilt church was consecrated on 22 July 1916. Fortunately, the church registers (from 1538), the brass altar cross (dated June 1887) and the church plate (including an Elizabethan chalice and paten) all survived, as did the large brass eagle lectern. Its base is engraved "This lectern was saved from the fire which destroyed the church June 1st 1914", and it is reported that it took four men to lift it.

The parish registers are to be found at the Berkshire Record Office (under D/P 145 ...), whilst the Bishops' Transcripts (at the Wiltshire Record Office) fortunately are available for the now illegible pages of the original registers. They are not listed on the IGI, although the Wargrave Local History Society has a basic index to the entries from the mid-1700s onwards.

The village schools date back more than 200 years, having already existed when Robert Piggott wrote his will in 1796. The Piggotts were a long-standing Wargrave family, and Robert established two schools, one for boys and the other for girls. His sister Anne left a further large

sum of money in her will for the schools when she died in 1827. The schools had begun in houses in the High Street, but soon moved to Victoria Road and merged with the National School, also run by the church. A new school building was erected in 1862 (the present junior school), and when pupil numbers outgrew the space available, the infants were moved in 1910 to occupy what had been the District School. By the mid-1930s, the main school building was again overcrowded, and the vicar of the time, Canon Stephen Winter, raised funds for the building of a school to cater for the older pupils, not only of Wargrave, but from the surrounding villages as well. The foundation stone was laid in 1939, and the school opened in 1940. The records of the school (at the Berkshire Record Office) include the trustees' first minute book from 1799 (D/P 145 25/11), recording the names of the pupils admitted, whilst a number of the school log books survive from the late nineteenth century. Both are full of detail for family historians.

Another member of the Piggott family, John, gave land for a workhouse in the village in 1770. The census for 1841 lists 161 paupers who were resident there, along with the governor and his family, the schoolmaster and the porter. Sadly, of course, the place of birth is not detailed, but the majority came from Berkshire. In 1849 it was decided to move the inmates to the Wokingham workhouse, and the Wargrave buildings were



Hillands North Block 1883

then used as a District (or Poor Law Board) School. This was run jointly by the Poor Law Guardians for Wokingham and Reading, and the censuses from 1851 record many scholars from Reading. Unfortunately, the 1861 census only gives pupils' initials, but the others all give the forename and surname of each scholar, and the 1871 census even adds if they were "chargeable to Reading" or "chargeable to Wokingham". The front page of the enumeration book for 1901 even helpfully adds that it is for the "Reading and Wokingham District School, for boarding, lodging and educating pauper children".

Additional information about the District School may be gleaned from the letter book deposited at the Berkshire Record Office.

Another establishment in the village was an army academy, set up by the Rev Albert Pritchard. He had arrived in Wargrave in 1871 and practised as a tutor, but from about 1879 he expanded into the preparation of young men for

training as army officers. He acquired premises called Hillands, probably from 1881. The 1881 census listed a number of students lodging at various houses in the village, but by 1891 there are 15 students listed at Hillands, in its North Block (added in 1883) and South Block, as well as at some lodging houses in the village. The students came from a wide area. Most notable was a certain 18-year-old from Taunton called Hugh Trenchard, later to become the Lord Trenchard who is considered to be the founder of the Royal Air Force.

Another valuable source of information on Wargrave, which includes mention of the schools, is the Wargrave parish magazine. First published in April 1861, it includes many references to events and individuals in the village, not just church matters. There is a set from the first issue now deposited at the Berkshire Record Office. They are not indexed, however, so an idea as to when an event happened is helpful if making a search.

Peter Delaney has for many years been secretary of Wargrave Local History Society, having earlier been its chairman. He contributed to The book of Wargrave (history & reminiscences) and was both contributor to and editor of The second book of Wargrave. Both are available from the Berks FHS Bookshop – see middle pages. Historic village walks is available from the Wargrave Local History Society at £2.50.

Fair Mile Hospital 1870-2003

The Berkshire Record Office has recently released to the public the archives of Fair Mile Hospital, the old Berkshire Asylum. Kate Tyte, the project archivist, tells the story of the hospital from 1870 to 2003, showing that such institutions were by no means the gothic madhouses of popular fiction.

The County Asylums Act of 1808 allowed local authorities to create public asylums, but it was not mandatory. Most counties did not therefore make any special provision for the mentally ill, who were usually cared for by their families or in workhouses or in prisons.

The Lunatics Act of 1845 compelled all counties to make provision for the treatment of their "pauper lunatics", and made this the responsibility of local magistrates. Berkshire's magistrates responded by contracting out care of the mentally ill to Oxfordshire's newly built Littlemore Asylum. By 1867 this was no longer adequate for Berkshire's needs, so the magistrates formed a union with the boroughs of Reading and Newbury, and appointed a Committee of Visitors to oversee the creation and management of a new asylum. They purchased land in Cholsey, close to Moulsoford railway station and began building work that year. The Moulsoford Asylum opened in September 1870 and the first patients were transferred from Littlemore. In 1897 its name was changed to the Berkshire Lunatic Asylum, and at some point between 1915 and 1920 (the exact date is unclear) it became known as the Berkshire Mental Hospital.

Like many contemporary asylums it was situated in an isolated rural spot, thought to be soothing for the patients and to limit the possibility of escapes. Proximity to the railway station was an essential factor because of the large quantities of coal that had to be delivered to such a big institution.

The asylum was designed in typical style by C H Howell of Islington (1824-1905), the leading asylum architect of the time. It had a central administrative block, with separate wings accommodating the patients, who were strictly sex-segregated in dormitories to the left and right of the central blocks. The complex had various outbuildings, including a boiler room, workshops, bakery, laundry, chapel, gatehouse and outlying farms and gardens.

It was managed by the medical superintendent, who also attended to the patients. The on-site facilities and large range of auxiliary staff meant that the asylum functioned as an almost self-sufficient community. In 1873 the farm saved the asylum a great deal of money by producing 575lbs of butter, 1,832 gallons of milk, 2,137 gallons of skimmed milk, 6,436lbs of pork, 491lbs of veal, 41 fowls, 744 eggs, 237 sacks of potatoes, and vegetables worth £94 7s 7d.¹

Many of the asylum's patients did not have what we would now consider to be mental illnesses, but most of them obviously needed care, rather than simply being eccentric or misfits. Many of the patients would now be easily cured or would not have fallen ill; for example, large numbers of women were admitted suffering from mental health problems as a side effect of post-natal infections caused by poor hygiene. Many patients were admitted suffering from tertiary syphilis, a fatal condition affecting the brain and nervous system, causing severe neurological problems. Also included were elderly and people with serious learning disabilities. It was not until 1930, when the Berkshire and Oxfordshire county councils created the Borocourt Institution, that a local alternative to the mental hospital became available for people with learning disabilities.

The asylum could offer little effective medical treatment for mental illness, or for many physical illnesses, but followed the system of "moral treatment". This was a humane regime in which patients were offered basic medical care and nursing, a nourishing diet, plenty of fresh air and exercise, and they were encouraged to work around the asylum if they were well enough.

It was hoped that by removing their everyday cares, constantly observing them, keeping them occupied, and offering increased trust and rewards for good behaviour, many patients could be persuaded back to a sane, sober existence of Victorian moral values and work ethic. They

were rarely restrained in straitjackets or padded cells, and every instance of such restraint had to be meticulously recorded by order of the Commissioner in Lunacy in the Register of Mechanical Restraint.

Patients' work was sex-segregated, with males working outside on the farms or gardens, or in the shoemaking or upholstery workshops. Female patients worked in the laundry, the kitchens, and sewed thousands of items for the use of the asylum. In 1871 alone they sewed 1,070 items, hemmed 2,555 items, marked 5,385 items with initials, and repaired 6,846 items.²

There was also a varied programme of entertainment including cricket and football for the men, tennis lessons for the women, outdoor tea dances, evening dances, theatrical and musical performances, a choir and band, and supervised walks outside the grounds on Sundays. In 1872 the asylum cricket team actually won a match against Cholsey cricket club. The patients were also provided with a library, newspapers, pianos and bagatelle tables. One year the asylum even took 106 patients on a trip to Wallingford agricultural show.

The moral treatment regime could do little for the elderly, the learning-disabled or severely ill, but it was surprisingly effective at rehabilitating many of its patients enough to return home. By 1913 the asylum had admitted a total of 5,448 patients, 1,697 of whom recovered and were discharged.³

The asylum employed nursing, clerical, and a whole range of skilled and unskilled auxiliary staff. These included a farm bailiff, farm labourers, gardeners, an engineer, a gasman, porters, cooks, kitchen and laundry maids, a baker, a needlewoman, a shoemaker, carpenters, bricklayers, and stokers, their job being to shovel coal into the furnaces needed to fuel the hot water supply, underfloor heating, and steam-driven kitchen and laundry apparatus. In 1912 the asylum bought a mechanical stoking device to replace these men.

Most of the staff lived on site or in purpose-built nearby cottages. In addition to wages they received cooked meals, uniforms, board and lodgings or an allowance of farm produce to take

home, so they had virtually everything they needed provided. This was just as well, because nursing staff were expected to work from 6am to 8pm, six days a week, and from 6am to 6pm on Sundays. They were allowed just one Sunday off a month, starting at 10am, and one week's annual holiday, on reduced pay.

Staff recruitment and retention was a continual problem for the hospital, especially female nursing staff, partly because of the long hours and demanding nature of the work, and partly because they almost always left upon marriage. Staff wages were gradually increased over the years, and staff dining rooms and recreation rooms were added, along with a billiard table in 1890. Dr Murdoch commented that raising the wages and introducing indoor entertainments could do little to combat the disadvantages of an isolated and dull position.⁴

The asylum was designed to accommodate 285 patients, and it was almost full within its first year. After that the numbers of patients simply grew and grew:⁵

year	no. of patients
1870-71	281
1875	343
1880	501
1885	550
1890	601
1896*	659
1900	766
1905	880
1910	928

The asylum was extended between 1878 and 1880 because Oxfordshire bought out Berkshire's remaining share in the Littlemore Asylum, creating an influx of patients. In 1896 the borough of New Windsor joined the Berkshire Union, and the asylum was extended again.

The increase in the catchment area, however, could not fully explain the growth in patient numbers. It was probably caused by large numbers of chronically ill patients who, with little hope of recovery, remained in the asylum until they died, often a period of many years. The first year's admissions included 30 patients over the age of 60 and suffering from dementia, 17

“idiots”, 14 with epilepsy, and a number with tertiary syphilis.⁶ In 1897 the increasingly desperate Dr Murdoch states that “out of the whole 623 patients in the asylum only 23 can reasonably hope to be cured”.⁷ The presence of the asylum and its reputation as a place of humane care also tended to decrease people’s tolerance for their helpless and dependent relatives, and increased the likelihood that they would be admitted. Thus the asylum tended to become a great warehouse for storing those whom no one else wanted to care for, rather than a curative institution.

During the First World War additional patients were transferred to the asylum from other hospitals, such as the Sussex County Asylum, when these were taken over as military hospitals. As well as having to accommodate more patients, the hospital struggled with a reduced number of male staff, as they were called up for military service. The medical superintendent attended many tribunals to try to get staff members exempted. By 1918 37 male employees had joined up, two had been given medals, seven had been wounded and four had been killed. The war also brought two German prisoners of war to the hospital in November 1914, which understandably caused tensions with the other patients.

Another influx occurred during the Second World War, as patients were transferred from Brookwood Hospital in Surrey, Great Yarmouth Naval Hospital, Norfolk, and Hill End Hospital in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The Berkshire hospital reached its greatest size, accommodating over 1,400 patients. There were again staffing issues; the first medical assistant, Dr William Ogden, left to join the Army Medical Corps, before returning in 1945 to take up the position of medical superintendent. Staff shortages also meant that many secretarial and clerical positions, previously held only by men, were taken up by women, and the



Theatre poster, 1872, D/H10/F1/1/1

hospital’s first female doctor, Dr Beryl Senneck, became the assistant medical officer in 1945.

In 1948 the hospital was incorporated into the NHS and its name was changed to Fair Mile Hospital. More effective methods of treatment, higher standards of living and general health, and the care in the community programme gradually led to a reduction in patient numbers, so that by the 1990s there were only approximately 300 patients remaining at Fair Mile. In 2003 Fair Mile closed, as it no longer provided appropriate accommodation, and the remaining patients were transferred to newly built facilities at Prospect Park, Reading.

- 1 Annual report 1873 BRO Q/AL 12/1.
- 2 Annual report 1871 BRO Q/AL 12/1.
- 3 Annual report 1913 BRO Q/AL 12/7.
- 4 Annual report 1900 BRO Q/AL 12/5.
- 5 Taken from tables in the annual reports.
- 6 Annual report 1870/1 BRO Q/AL 12/1.
- 7 Annual report 1897 BRO Q/AL 12/5.

More about Fair Mile

Visit <www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/collections/fairmile.htm> to see more detail and pictures.

Patient records are closed for 100 years, and detailed staff records for 50 years, for confidentiality. Data protection is lifted once a person is dead, however, so researchers may apply to the BRO for such records. The usual search fees will apply.

Using Ancestry for the census

<www.ancestry.co.uk>

Gillian Stevens outlines the basic steps

A census is tangible evidence that our ancestors existed, and now Ancestry.co.uk has put online the seven census years 1841 -1901 for the whole of England and Wales. It is not 100 per cent complete, but it is very nearly so, with just a few bits missing, either because the original records are damaged or lost, or because some pages have not been filmed by The National Archives, the providers of the images. No longer is it necessary to go to the local record office or to travel to the Family Record Centre in London, and wade through reel upon reel of microfilm looking for relatives; now we can just sit in front of the computer screen and with a click of a mouse find great-great-grandfather on the Ancestry index. Then, by following the prompt, it is possible to view an image from the original enumerator's schedule of him and his household. Research that used to take years to complete can now be done very quickly.

To census records for England and Wales Ancestry.co.uk has also recently added the index (no images) to the 1841 census for Scotland. It also holds images of all the birth, marriage and death index pages for civil registration from 1 July 1837 to 1983, an index for 1984 to 2000, an index for birth, marriage and death 1984-2000, as well as having the searchable transcribed records from the FreeBMD project. New records are being added every week, and even though there are no other datasets which are complete, there are numerous records to be found including newspapers, trade directories, probate records and immigration lists.

There are many different ways to carry out a search. However the simplest search can be carried out from the home page. I decided to see if I could find out something about the family history of the

society's president, William Benyon, and those who once lived at his home in Englefield.

I entered just a surname into the last name box and then clicked on the search button.

The screenshot shows the 'Search for Your Ancestors' form. It has two tabs: 'Ranked Search' and 'Exact Search'. Below the tabs, it states 'We will only show records that match all of these fields.' There are three input fields: 'First Name(s)', 'Last Name' (containing 'Benyon'), and 'Spelling' (set to 'Exact'). Below these is a 'Country' section with 'Lived in' set to 'All Countries'. There is a 'Year range' section with 'to' and 'e.g. 1827 to 1903'. At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'Include records originating outside the UK' and a 'Search' button.

As can be seen from the next screen shot, there are many Benyon individuals in all years of the census and many birth, marriage and death records.

The screenshot shows search results for 'Benyon'. It is divided into two sections: 'Census Records' and 'Birth, Marriage, & Death Records'. The 'Census Records' section lists five census years with their respective counts: 1901 (467), 1891 (440), 1881 (368), 1871 (304), and 1861 (272). The 'Birth, Marriage, & Death Records' section lists five categories with their counts: England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index: 1837-1983 (803), England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index: 1837-1983 (595), England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index: 1837-1983 (482), England & Wales, Birth Index: 1984-2004 (460), and England & Wales, Marriage Index: 1984-2004 (269).

Category	Count
1901 England Census	467
1891 England Census	440
1881 England Census	368
1871 England Census	304
1861 England Census	272
England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index: 1837-1983	803
England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index: 1837-1983	595
England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index: 1837-1983	482
England & Wales, Birth Index: 1984-2004	460
England & Wales, Marriage Index: 1984-2004	269

As well as the search results shown above there were 91 entries in *Periodicals & newspapers*, 10 in *Directories and members lists*, 6 in *Court land and probate records* and 964 entries in *Family and local histories, Trees and communities, Reference and finding aids*.

All the above can be seen without paying a penny, but further access to those datasets marked with a padlock needs payment. There are several payment plans including a yearly subscription to all UK indexes and images for £69.95 and a pay-per-view plan for £4.95 where one can

view 10 records within 14 days. Society members can visit Berks FHS Research Centre in Reading, where there is access to the Library edition of Ancestry on the society's computers. This includes not only UK datasets but also all those from America and other countries.

This shows the search results from the 1901 census index for James Herbert Benyon and his family living in Englefield.

All Census Results							Viewing 1-5 of 5
View Record	Name	Estimated Birth Year	Birthplace	Relationship	Civil Parish	County/Island	View Image
View Record	Edith Isabel Benyon	abt 1852	Uffendane, Devon, England	Wife	Englefield	Berkshire	
View Record	Edith M Benyon	abt 1880	Brampton, London, England	Daughter	Englefield	Berkshire	
View Record	Henry A Benyon	abt 1885	Chelsea, London, England	Son	Englefield	Berkshire	
View Record	James Herbert Benyon	abt 1850	Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England	Head	Englefield	Berkshire	
View Record	Winifred Benyon	abt 1895	Chelsea, London, England	Daughter	Englefield	Berkshire	

And if you click on the view image icon at the end of a row the original enumerator's page will be displayed (partial image shown).

By being able to view easily seven years of the census we can speedily build up a picture, not only of our direct ancestors, but also of their siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles, in-laws and neighbours.

Gillian Stevens has for several years served the society in a variety of roles. Currently she organises the society's participation at family history fairs and exhibitions, and is a member of the computer branch committee.

A policeman's lot

Superintendent Charles Goddard 1861-1946

Dawn Smalley

Charles Goddard was my great-great-uncle on my paternal great-grandmother's side. Son of an agricultural labourer from a large family in rural Berkshire, he rose through the police ranks to become superintendent by the age of 42. He remained in the Berkshire Constabulary until retirement at the age of 71, having served 51 years. He was involved in the unravelling of the mysterious disappearance of Agatha Christie in 1926, and this had always been of interest to me, coupled with the fact that he was a well known and respected figure in Wokingham, where I grew up.

Charles Goddard was born on New Year's Day 1861 and baptised on 8 February at Eaton Hastings, near Faringdon. The son of Charles Goddard, a labourer, and Eleanor Snuggs, from Charlton, Wantage, he was one of eight children (including Boaz, my great-great grandfather). Two years prior to 1881, he was employed by George Adams at Pidnell Farm, but by that date both he and his brother Jesse (also working at the farm), had joined the Berkshire Constabulary. His Police Examination Record at the Berkshire Record Office states his height as 5ft 8¼ in, his

visage full, complexion clear, eyes grey and hair dark. He was both literate and single at that point.

Sworn in on 4 June 1881, he began his police career in Maidenhead, being promoted to second-class police constable in 1882 when he married Rachel Brooks at Kidlington on 31 August, and to first-class constable in 1883. By 1885 he had moved to Wokingham and Sandhurst Division, and he was made sergeant in 1895. After becoming inspector at Wokingham in 1901, he was made superintendent in 1903, based in the Rectory Road police station. Though no longer a police station it retains its imposing Victorian features today.

Apparently, Supt Goddard was well liked by the public, but not so popular with members of the Force, as he had “held back promotion from elsewhere.” Elderly residents of the town have professed that he was kind but firm. Indeed, my grandfather, Jack Page, when young and working as a footman at Buckhurst Park, recalled his great-uncle Charles being very authoritative with the crowds at Royal Ascot.

According to Charles’ obituary in *The Berkshire Chronicle* on 15 March 1946, he had been responsible for many important arrests. Perhaps one of his most exciting moments occurred at Ascot Races when the royal party was leaving the enclosure. A “violent lunatic” tried to get at the royal car! Supt Goddard was the first police officer to tackle the man, whom he succeeded in dragging out of the way of the royal procession. On other occasions he made arrangements for numerous royal visits to Wellington College and to the Royal Military College.

In a newspaper interview Charles recalled with amusement that he had “corrected” King Edward VII on a visit to Wellington for keeping Queen Alexandra, the Duke of Connaught and other members of the royal family waiting for a

photo-call. Charles later received a copy of the photo.

Early on in his career in Sandhurst he was known as the man who tamed Owlsmoor, a particularly rough beat full of caravans and dogs in those days. Difficult work and lively assaults were part of his lot whilst he was there, but with the building of a police station, the construction of new roads and the assistance of PC (later Inspector) Haddrell, the district settled into its present peaceful condition. His first case of importance had been the finding of the body of a baby in Bray Lock, and although at the inquest the jury returned an open verdict, he was directed to continue inquiries, which resulted a week

later in the arrest of the child’s mother. Another documented anecdote concerns a pub landlady in Hurst; a local resident reported: “In comes Goddard, the superintendent from Wokingham ... ‘I want a sample of your whisky, Marg,’ he said. Well, she brought it out and she dropped it ... smashed it all over the floor; it was watered, you see...”

By far the most high-profile case, however, was that of Agatha Christie’s disappearance from her home in Sunningdale in December 1926. Her car was found abandoned at a Surrey beauty spot, and both Surrey and Berkshire police forces were drafted in to investigate. Unlike his Surrey

counterpart, Supt Goddard was convinced that Agatha Christie was alive, especially after visiting her home, Styles, where the servants had been interviewed. In his book, *Agatha Christie and the eleven missing days*, Jared Cade explores the idea that Agatha had elaborately staged her disappearance as a method of humiliating her unfaithful husband. However, Agatha Christie’s daughter Rosalind Hicks was furious with Cade’s account and thoroughly disputed it. It offers an interesting insight into one of the most intriguing



cases of the superintendent's career.

In another situation, Goddard gave evidence at the inquest of a fatal air crash which had taken place in July 1931 at Cross Lanes Farm, Arborfield, near Reading. The pilot, Mrs Baring, who was well known in society, and her passenger, a bank director, were killed instantly, both receiving terrible injuries. A verdict of accidental death was concluded; it was suspected that the pilot had been taken ill at the controls.

Charles' wife, Rachel, died in 1918 and, according to tradition, the "blinds were drawn throughout the town, testifying to the esteem and regard in which the deceased was held" (*Reading Mercury*). At her funeral, six police officers acted as pall-bearers and the congregation included the Mayor of Wokingham, the Chief Constable of Berkshire and many other police officers, not to mention representatives from the fire service. One can only imagine that his wife's untimely death spurred him to throw himself into his duties even further.

Having been presented with the King's Police Medal for his distinguished record in the administrative branches of the services, for his success in organising the police force, and for special services to royalty and heads of state, Charles had by 1932 taken the decision to retire to his purpose-built house opposite the police station in Rectory Road. It was named Coppid House, and retirement photographs were taken of him in his study and standing outside in full uniform. He devoted a large amount of his retirement to social work in Wokingham, sitting on the town council and retaining a keen interest in matters connected with criminal reform.

It was at Coppid House that Charles Goddard died on 13 March 1946, after suffering a cerebral haemorrhage at All Saints, Wokingham, whilst on his churchwarden's duties the previous Sunday. His civic funeral was held at the church, after cremation – rather unusual at that time, but expressly requested in his will. I think it particularly poignant that the *Reading Standard* reported that this casket was followed by seven police superintendents, "all personal friends of Supt Goddard". His will specified that his ashes be buried in the same grave as his late wife in All

Saints' churchyard, with his name, official position and date of death (not age) inscribed on the monument already erected. As such, the fine cross remains today. Sadly, they left no direct family.

According to the list of family mourners at Rachel Goddard's funeral (*Reading Mercury* 11 May 1918), Mr W J Thatcher was Rachel's nephew. In Charles' will, he appointed Wilfred James Thatcher of Coppid House (civil servant) as sole executor and bequeathed him a legacy of £100 "whether he shall prove my Will or not". (He did.) All the residue of his personal and real estate was left to Rose Henrietta Thatcher, wife of Wilfred, for her sole use and benefit absolutely. This in itself is quite thought-provoking: why did Rose inherit the house if Wilfred was Rachel's nephew?

Charles Goddard came to Wokingham by chance, his ancestors having lived all their lives in the Vale of the White Horse. My parents also arrived in Wokingham by chance. Thus I was born and raised there, little knowing that my 3 x great-uncle was such a prominent character in the area. It has taken me nearly 20 years to discover only a fragment of his life's story!

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Civil registration

the future is (almost) paperless

Barbara Dixon, who is the superintendent registrar for Slough, outlines the government's plans to digitise registrations of future births, marriages and deaths.

In May 2006 the government announced its intention to press ahead with developing a timetable for radical changes to the traditional system of registering births, marriages and deaths.

We are all well aware that births, marriages and deaths have long been documented by certificates, but in the future there will be no certificates for any of these events. Instead, all births, marriages and deaths will be recorded on a central database, and all events for the same people linked. Even changes of name by deed poll will be added.

For births and deaths, the event will be reported by the same people as now, together with a few other people such as partners and executors of wills. However the event will be recorded via the internet or telephone, and no paperwork will be issued. It is hoped that such a system would help to cut down on the amount of fraud that currently exists using paper certificates. Each baby will have a unique identifying number issued at birth by the midwife, together with a limited amount of information. Registrations by parents will only be confirmed where there is a definite match between the two sets of information. A life record will then be created, with events such as marriage, divorce, changes of name and death being added to the original record. Certain official bodies will be authorised to access this database (e.g. the DVLA, Passport Office and banks) thus bypassing the need for certificates, and again reducing the opportunity for fraud.

Marriages too will be put onto the internet database, but when Notice of Intent to Marry is given it may be at any register office in England and Wales. The notice will be displayed on the internet, but it will still also be displayed locally to the public. Local authorities, which will inherit the responsibility for the register offices and their



staff, will each have to decide how and where to display the notice. A schedule of marriage will be issued to the parties naming the venue and, after the ceremony, all parties will sign it. It will then be returned to the central database at the GRO, but no further paperwork will be issued here either.

Marriages may take place in any venue and at any time of the day or night. The controlling factor will change from where the marriage is taking place (as happens today) to who is conducting the marriage – the civil or religious celebrant.

The major changes that affect us as family historians are that in future we will be allowed to access the original registers currently held by the register offices, but local authorities will have to decide where they are to be kept and how they can be accessed. These indexes should become more widely available, free and more usefully organised, but there may be a charge for reading the original record. This could vary from authority to authority.

Ultimately, there will be no physical certificates issued in the future, nor will there be further registers made. Thus there will be no further quarterly GRO records or indexes. Finding where a particular set of registers is held could be more of a problem in the future.

The last major change is that there will be closure on recent records that will prevent family historians obtaining details of such events. Birth records will be closed for 75 years, marriages for 50 years and deaths for 25 years. At present that would mean that you could not access birth records after 1931, marriages after 1956 and deaths after 1981. If you require any of these records, get them now.

In December 2005 civil partnerships were introduced. Some aspects of these already reflect

the changes that are to come in marriages. Notices are given directly to a central database via the internet. Only one schedule is issued, which the authority doing the ceremony prints (not the authority which took the notice, as in marriages). There are no legal registers, although authorities may run a voluntary one if they wish. Certificates may be

printed from any office within England and Wales.

During the changeover period there will be a dual system. Loose leaf registers will be printed and signed by the informant and the registrar, and these will continue to be held by the local office. Registrations will continue to be made at the register office.

Barbara Dixon is the author of two books on registration for family historians: Birth and death certificates, England and Wales, 1837 to 1969 (1999) and Marriages and certificates (2000). Both are available from the society's bookshop.

William Godfrey 1610 - 1696

a man of substance

Valerie Storie, who chairs the Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead branch, has pieced together a comfortable family lifestyle from her seventeenth-century ancestor's will and inventory.

The Gunpowder Plot, the Civil War, the Restoration of Charles II, the Great Fire of London and many other seventeenth-century events fill our history books. Yet once in a while, something happens to make past events become real, almost like reading today's newspaper. Researching my family history led me to an eight-times great-grandfather called William Godfrey. I know so much about him, his family and his day-to-day living from parish records, his will, and a very detailed inventory of all his worldly goods.

William was born in 1610 in East Hanney, a small village in old Berkshire and mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The parish of West Hanney includes East Hanney and Lyford, and from early times these villages were known as "islands in the Vale of the White Horse", being fertile pastures surrounded by low-lying marshy ground. The basic structure of the parish church was completed by the Normans in 1160¹ and it was dedicated to St James, although some early documents refer to it as the church of the Blessed Mary in Hanney. It stands on a Saxon site, of

which little remains except for two stone Saxon coffins within the church.

It was in this ancient parish church that William's parents, William Godfrey the Elder and Audrey Doe, were married on 3 March 1605(06), just a few months after the Gunpowder Plot. "My" William was the eldest son of their five children.



interior of St James' church

He was baptised on 29 May 1610 in the parish church and, following the custom for the eldest son, he was given his father's forename. Hanney was rich farming country, where William grew up learning from his father how to make a good living from the land. William the Elder was a yeoman, owning property in East Hanney as well as in neighbouring

villages. Thus privileged, William inherited land and property from his father, who died relatively young in January 1633(34).

At the age of 29 William married Marye Collins in West Hanney church on 20 May 1639,² and the next year their son, also William, was born. Then followed a daughter Mary a year later, and baby Thomas in January 1643(44). But Thomas was sickly, and after two short months he was carried

back to the church and laid to rest on 21 March. Eighteen months later another son (also called Thomas) was born. He was baptised on 24 August 1645.

By now the Civil War was raging, and battles between the Royalists and Parliamentary forces were never far away. Berkshire loyalties were divided, and the area frequently found itself in the path of fighting forces moving between London and the King's headquarters in Oxford. The first Battle of Newbury was fought in September 1643, and the second in October of the following year. There is no evidence as to where William's loyalties lay; I would like to think he was a Royalist (better hats!) but families were often divided, with brother fighting brother, or father and son on different sides.

Then tragedy struck. Marye died when young Thomas was only 15 months old. William buried his Marye on 16 November 1646. We cannot begin to imagine what life was like for a man with three young children to bring up, but the close-knit family were all living nearby, so we can only that hope everyone played their part.

Charles I was beheaded in January 1648(49). The weather was so cold that the River Thames froze, and the barge carrying his body to Windsor for burial was delayed several days.

William remarried on 1 November 1652 at Denchworth. Frances Eales came from this neighbouring village, and over the course of the next few years two more children, Robert and Martha, were born. This was the time of the Commonwealth; a grim and austere period, with somewhat sparse parish records. Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, and in May 1660, amidst great rejoicing, Charles II was proclaimed King. Normal life began to return.

The King and his court fled to Oxford at the time of the Plague in 1665, and although more

than half a million people perished, Berkshire was not unduly affected. The next year the Great Fire swept through London, effectively ending the epidemic. During this time William prospered, and was able to buy property in the village, together with arable land and an acre of meadow. He had more land with a house in the nearby village of Uffington, which he rented to his sister-in-law. Soon he owned more than 10 acres of arable land. In time William, Mary and Thomas all married, and produced children. Martha married well, her husband being a yeoman and thus a man of property. Robert became his father's right-hand man, and did not marry until shortly before his father's death.

The great frost of 1683-84 was reckoned to be the most severe ever recorded. Birds were said to have frozen in mid-air and animals suffered greatly.³ At the age of 77 in 1687 William, still "beinge of perfect health and memory", wrote his will.⁴ The poorest people in the village were to be given 40 shillings between them, and the eldest son would receive the proverbial "one shilling". Some property was left to his son Thomas, and much of the land and other properties to Robert for his use, and then to his "heires and assignes for ever". "My now wife the summe of Forty Shillings a yeareby even and equall pounds.... at the Feast of St Michael th archangel and at th annunciacion of o' Blessed Lady St Mary the virgin during her Naturall Life".

The draperies around the tester beds were highly prized, and rather touchingly William left his eldest daughter Mary the "coverlet and coffer from the best chamber which belonged to her mother". Generous bequests were made to all his children and grandchildren and, despite William's "one shilling of good and lawful money", most of his inheritance had come as a marriage settlement together with "all such standards and other goods as were agreed to be



left to him by Articles upon his Marriage” which were “my Feather bed covered and bolster commonly used in the Chamber where I now lodgeth and the two formes in the hall and the great settle which used to stand before the Chimney”.⁴

From William's very detailed will there is a picture of family life, with everyone carefully named, but it was all a bit premature. William lived on for almost 10 more years, before being buried in West Hanney church on 18 December 1696. Robert continued his father's business, and William's widow Frances lived until December 1713.

William had founded the West Hanney dynasty from which I am descended and Robert founded the East Hanney dynasty. Both lines continued into the mid-to-late nineteenth century before the Godfrey name itself died out through lack of direct male heirs.

Compared with modern times, such families existed with relatively few possessions. An inventory taken soon after his death, when two yeomen friends of William's came to his home on 30 December 1696, put a value of £130 15s 6d on his goods (about £10,212 according to TNA currency converter). Robert Callis and William Strange valued his wearing apparel and money in his purse at £5. Often clothes were handed down, although not in this instance; maybe they were worn out. In his bedroom were the bed draperies, a bolster, a pillow, two blankets and two coverlets as well as a chair and two stools. The main hall had a table and numerous chairs besides the great settle which stood alongside the chimney. All the cooking was done here; two spits and other kitchen-type utensils were listed, yet the hall was worth a mere £1 10s. There were two more bedrooms, a larder containing 15 pewter plates as well as nine others, flagons, a couple of salt boxes and a dozen spoons. Seven barrels were in the room set aside for brewing, and there was a dairy and a room for washing clothes. Linen included bolster cases, pillow-cases, blankets, five tablecloths and 30 napkins. More beds, several more tables and chairs, lots of skillets, kettles (similar to modern saucepans), a warming pan, a frying pan and a couple of dressers were listed. And four chamber pots.

Clearly William and Frances lived a relatively comfortable life. The land provided a good living, enabling them both to have far longer lives than the average for the late seventeenth century.

William Godfrey died over 300 years ago, yet I feel at one with him. So many baptisms, marriages and burials were in the winter months, which records show to be far more severe than we have now.⁵ I went into the church on a warm day in summer, yet it felt cold within those ancient walls. It was profoundly moving to touch the font and to be on the very same spot where so many had stood before. I shivered with the cold – or perhaps it was merely the ghosts of family past having a look at me.

1. *A short history of Hanney* by Diana R Bowder.
2. *Parish records for West Hanney in the Berkshire Record Office.*
3. *The Berkshire weather book* by Ian Currie, Mark Davison & Bob Ogle (1994).
4. *Will of William Godfrey, Yeoman of East Hanney. Written in 1687 and proved at Abingdon 3 May 1697. Berkshire Record Office ref: BRO D/A1/74/2.*
5. *Samuel Pepys frequently mentions the weather, and agricultural records of the time comment on cold winters and warm summers.*

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Gleanings

from exchange magazines

Daphne Spurling trawls the magazines of other family history societies.

Several dozen of these titles are received under the FFHS exchange scheme, and filed in the exchange magazine library at the Research Centre. They are also taken to branch meetings in Reading and Bracknell, from where they may be borrowed by members. If you cannot get to Reading or Bracknell, but would like to see one of the articles in full, please contact Daphne Spurling on <Dmspurling@aol.com>. It may be necessary to make a small charge to cover postage and photocopying.

School records. Hillingdon FHS, no 72, Dec 2005

Costermongers. East Surrey FHS, vol 29, no 1, Mar 2006

Medical practioners in Westmorland 1700-1800. (Names about 150.) Cumbria FHS, no 117, Nov 2005

Parish profile of Yarkhill. Herefordshire FHS, vol IX, no 9, Apr 2006

The National Register of Archives. Oxfordshire FHS, vol 20, no 1, Apr 2006

The London Gazette. Oxfordshire FHS, vol 20, no 1, Apr 2006

A guide to poor law and workhouse records. (in Manchester) Manchester Genealogist, vol 42, no 1, 2006

Discover more about our county – Watlington. Norfolk FHS, vol 4, part 6, Jun 2006

Know your parish – history of the parish of Masham. Cleveland FHS, vol 9, no 10, Apr 2006

Publishing my family history, the Malbons of Cheshire, England. (Details of sending the document in pdf format to a POD Print on Demand website which will print as many copies as needed, when needed. Website in USA but printing in UK.) British Columbia FHS, vol 35, no 1, Mar 2006

What records have I looked at? Keeping a research log. NZ Genealogist, vol 37, no 298, Mar/Apr 2006

A farming heritage: the story of a Shepherd family. (Traces a Berkshire family from William Shepherd and Ann Bew at Child's Court Farm in

Yattendon late eighteenth century. One branch became tailors.) NZ Genealogist, vol 37, no 298, Mar/Apr 2006

A community archive project using Comma software designed for this purpose and heritage lottery funds. Clwyd FHS, no 88, Apr 2006

Spotlight on ... Seaton. Banyan Tree, East Yorkshire FHS, no 106, April 2006

Cucklington, Somerset. Somerset and Dorset FHS, vol 31, no 2, May 2006

Spotlight on East Holme, Dorset. Somerset and Dorset FHS, vol 31, no 2, May 2006

Cults village: its history and development. Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS, no 99, May 2006

Moray: the people and the land. Glasgow Group Report. Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS, no 99, May 2006

Life on an Irish farm (in early 1900s). Lancashire FHS, vol 28, no 2, May 2006

Union Workhouses with details of records. Sheffield and District FHS, vol 27, no 2, summer 2006

Tragedy and betrail [sic]: the story of Henry Fowle 1803-1849. (Henry's father was the vicar of Kintbury.) Journal of British Families in India, no 14, autumn 2005

West Oxfordshire workhouses. Oxfordshire FHS, vol 20, no 1, Apr 2006

Archives at Witney & District Museum. Oxfordshire FHS, vol 20, no 1, Apr 2006

Portrait of the parish of Penallt. Gwent FHS, no 82, Jun 2006

Romanies. West Middlesex FHS, vol 24, no 2, Jun 2006

Village profile – Barrington. Cambridgeshire FHS, vol 15, no 6, May 2006

Dr William's library. Cambridgeshire FHS, vol 15, no 6, May 2006, page 25

Censuses on <ancestry.co.uk>. Bucks FHS, vol 30, no 2, Jun 2006

Quarter sessions records: where to search for an illegitimate ancestor. Bristol & Avon FHS, no 124, Jun 2006

Online parish clerks. (These are volunteers who transcribe records for a specific parish which are then put on their own or their county's OPC web-sites. Cumberland, Westmorland, Devon, Sussex, Warwickshire and Wiltshire have OPC schemes.) Midland Ancestor, vol 15, no 6, Jun 2006

Treasures from the past – British Library newspaper collections. Sussex FHS, vol 17, no 2, Jun 2006

Family history research in Sweden. Derbyshire FHS, issue 117, Jun 2006

The DOVE (Digitisation of Vital Events) project. (By Siemens of the civil registration BMD records.) Herts FHS, no 97, Jun 2006

So your ancestors came from Millom. Cumbria FHS, no 119, May 2006

Lists of names: will of Mr W L Alexander of Lorton, died March 1910; will of Miss Isabel Ellery of Kirkby Kendal, died Dec 1788; and Moresby Poor Law Survey for 1801. Cumbria FHS, no 119, May 2006

Framework of family history – the calendar. Bedfordshire FHS, vol 15, no 6, Jun 2006

Beccles. (Includes names from poll books of 1710 and 1790, and directory of 1793-1798.) Suffolk FHS, vol 32, no 1, Jun 2006

Surrey entries in the male servants tax 1780. Part 2 M-Z. West Surrey FHS, vol 32, no 4, March 2006

West Surrey parish profiles – Hascombe & Hambledon. West Surrey FHS, vol 33, no 1, Jun 2006

Surrey recruits to Hampshire Police 1840 to 1920. West Surrey FHS, vol 33, no 1, Jun 2006

The following societies send magazines to Berks FHS under the exchange scheme.

Bedfordshire FHS	Kent FHS	Shropshire FHS	Glamorgan FHS
Birmingham and Midland Soc. for Gen. and Heraldry	Folkestone & District FHS	Somerset & Dorset FHS	Gwent FHS
Bristol & Avon FHS	Lancs FH & Heraldry Soc.	Suffolk FHS	Quaker FHS
Buckinghamshire FHS	Manchester & Lancs FHS	Felixstowe FHS	Inst. of Heraldic & Gen. Studies
Peterborough & District FHS	Leics & Rutland FHS	East Surrey FHS	Anglo-German FHS
North Cheshire FHS	Lincolnshire FHS	West Surrey FHS	British India Soc.
Cleveland FHS	Isle of Axholme FHS (Lincs)	Sussex FH Group	Soc. of Aust. Genealogists
Cornwall FHS	East of London FHS	Wiltshire FHS	Australian. FamilyTree Connections
Coventry FHS	London, Westminster & Middlesex FHS	Yorks Archaeological Soc.	Heraldry & Genealogy Soc. of Canberra
Cumbria FHS	Woolwich & District FHS	Doncaster & District FHS	Richmond-Tweed FHS (Aus.)
Derbyshire FHS	Hillingdon FHS	City of York & District FHS	New Zealand Soc of Genealogists
Devon FHS	West Middlesex FHS	East Yorkshire FHS	New Zealand FHS
Dorset FHS	Norfolk FHS	Sheffield & District FHS	Alberta FHS (Canada)
Essex Society for FH	Northamptonshire FHS	La Societe Guernesiate	British Columbia Genealogical Soc.
Gloucestershire FHS	Northumberland & Durham FHS	Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS	
Hampshire FHS	Nottinghamshire FHS	Clwyd FHS	
Herefordshire FHS	Oxfordshire FHS	Dyfed FHS	
Hertfordshire FHS			

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Letters may have to be edited, and it will be assumed, unless you ask otherwise, that you are happy to have your postal and email address published for replies.

COZENS

Talbot K. Greene (5920)

One of my maternal 2xgreat-grandmothers was born Martha Cozens, the daughter of William Cozens and Mary Bridge, who were married by licence in North Curry, Somerset, in 1785. William was the third son of William Cousins of Fivehead, Somerset, who married Mary Stone in St Mary's, Taunton in 1746.

When Martha was born her parents were living in Star Court off Bread St, Cheapside in London. *Kent's Directory* for 1799 shows her father ran a "Manchesters Warehouse" there wholesaling cotton goods. Martha had a brother who was taken into the business and who by 1808 switched it over to manufacturing watch movements. This lasted until 1840. I checked for the registration of William the watchmaker's death, said by Baillie (*Watchmakers and clockmakers of the world* 3rd ed 1963) to have occurred in 1842, and found one registered in Wallingford, but this was a young farmer from Little Wittenham. There was also the death in 1842 of an Alfred Cozens registered at the same place.

Looking through vol 29 of the BFH I spotted mention of the BRO receiving papers from Slade, Son and Taylor, solicitors of Wallingford, including some relating to the Cozens family who farmed in Cholsey, but I found nothing as early as 1842. However if any members have been researching these Berkshire Cozens, and can link them back to Somerset in the eighteenth century I would be most interested to hear about it.

MAYOTT

Ron Bowers (505)

A relation of mine, Roger Mayott, a farmer of Culham, died October 1509. His grandson Richard Mayott became the first mayor of Abingdon on 24 November 1556. I have managed to locate the farm just north of the London Road, but whence Roger came I have no positive clue. Even his birth totally eludes me. There is a suggestion that the Mayotts came from near St Lo in Normandy.

Can anyone enlighten me?

POWYS and LYBBE

Tim Powys-Lybbe

With reference to the article by Joy Pibworth *The Austen connection* (BFH Dec 2000) which reads:

The little boy was Edward Cooper, her nephew, who in later life married Caroline Lybbe, daughter of Philip and Caroline Lybbe Powys of Fawley, near Henley. (Philip was brother to Reverend Thomas Powys and took the extra surname when he married the heiress Caroline Lybbe).

This should read:

The little boy was Edward Cooper (1770-1833), her first cousin, who in later life married Caroline Isabella Powys (1775-1838), daughter of Philip Lybbe and Caroline Powys of Fawley, near Henley. (Philip was brother to Reverend Thomas Powys and never took

an extra surname when he married the heiress Caroline Girle.)

Might I add that Philip Lybbe Powys' parents were Philip Powys and Isabella Lybbe, who was also an heiress. No surname change took place until 1863, when my gt-gt-grandfather added Lybbe to his name, but his sons did not join this, and much later the surviving son had a deed poll name change to P-L. By then it was too late for his son, who did his deed poll in 1902, and so my father was the first ancestor of ours to be born as P-L in 1909.

Major Alexander Greenwood (1081)

My gt-gt-uncle, Charles Greenwood seems to have been a very distinguished Berkshire citizen when Wallingford was in Berkshire. *The Wallingford Advertiser* of 13 Sept 1878 describes him thus:

The tolling of all the church bells on Saturday morning conveyed to the inhabitants the intelligence which, some days previously had been expected, of the death of Mr. Charles Greenwood, one of the oldest inhabitants and most wealthy men in the district. Deceased was a native of this town, and descended from ancestors who for a great number of years resided here. In fact we question whether any other name has been associated for so long with this neighbourhood as that of Greenwood. The deceased was a Justice of the Peace for the borough for a

great number of years and was one of the Commissioners of Land and Associated Property and Income Taxes. He was also a member of the National School Committee and a trustee and manager of the National Savings Bank, and took an interest in most of the charitable and philanthropic movements around him, to which he was a liberal contributor. He attained a great age, viz 85. For some years he was partially blind, but his intellect remained comparatively unimpaired, and to the last he keenly enjoyed a chat with a neighbour on matters either of town gossip or national interest. Deceased was a bachelor and we understand the bulk of his property will pass to the family of his niece Mrs. Powys-Lybbe. His great age and impaired sight caused him to lead a retired life for some years, but it was only a week prior to this death that he was confined to his room. He died about 10 o'clock on Friday night, the 6th inst., and though the event was expected, it was nevertheless received by all classes with regret. The deceased was the owner of Rush Court Estate, the title of which was disputed in the court of Queen's Bench a few months ago and it must be a source of great satisfaction to the fortunate legatee of this very valuable property that the title has been so clearly substantiated...

Note the statement of the "great age of 85". The writer of this letter is 86 and a half. I still drive my car and write all my letters and use my computer.

Please note that for reasons of privacy private email and postal addresses have been redacted from this online archive. If you wish to contact someone named in this issue please contact the society.

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Bookends

Jean Debney reviews some new local and national family history titles

Easy family history: the stress-free guide to starting your research

by David Annal. The National Archives (2005) 266pp. ISBN 1-903365-79-1 £6.99 Berks FHS bookshop or by post incl p&p £7.40 UK. Abroad £7.75 surface, £8.45 airmail.

This easy-reading how-to-do-it book is full of practical advice and tips about records and techniques. It is illustrated with facsimile documents which, on the small pages, can be read more easily with a magnifying glass. Each chapter steers you via subsections listed as an introduction through the process of getting started, and the book unashamedly concentrates on nineteenth-century records which will give you most success. Useful additional notes and tips on each topic are printed on shaded backgrounds. Internet research has a chapter to itself but, in addition, useful websites are listed where appropriate to a topic, as well as in *Useful Websites*, between *Useful Addresses* and *Further Reading*. At the back there is a useful glossary and, of course, the vital index. Recommended for all beginners and also for anyone whose own how-to-do-it book is out of date.

The Berkshire Dunches

by Pete Annells. (the author, 2006), <pete_annells@yahoo.co.uk> A5 flexiback, 320pp. £15. For p&p enquire Berks FHS bookshop or see <www.berksfhs.org.uk>.

A huge amount of research has gone into this history of a whole parish for a local history course. From this the author became interested in the Dunch family who, from 1552 to 1719, held property in the parish of Little Wittenham, Berkshire (Oxfordshire since 1974) and also in other parts of Berkshire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Hampshire. The book is indexed, and illustrated with two line drawings, three maps and, at the back, some undated family trees. Despite some typos it will be a goldmine for anyone interested in the Dunch family and Little Wittenham. There is a website which will be updated with new finds about the family at <www.berkshire-dunches.co.uk>.

Historical walks in East Ilsley

by Sue Burnay. A5 flexiback, 24pp. ISBN 1-905291-07-8

This and the following item are well-researched and well-presented publications. Six walks radiating from the village pond include historical notes, and all are illustrated with captioned photographs and maps. The latter, based on a large-scale Ordnance Survey map circa 1910 are overlaid with black outlines for surviving properties, and red for new buildings. Points of interest are numbered in the text and on the maps.

“Far famed for sheep and wool”: a history of East Ilsley's markets and fairs

by Nigell Wardel. A5 flexiback, 24pp. ISBN 1-905291-10-8

Illustrated with photographs and a map plus two tables of nineteenth-century data, this book traces the history of the sheep fairs from 1222 over the centuries to the village fete which they have become today. The bibliography is at the back, with an appendix of senior citizens' memories recorded in 1975.

Both are published by East Ilsley Local History Society (2006). Price for each title is £2.50 Berks FHS bookshop or by post incl p&p £3.05 UK. Abroad £3.50 surface, £4.60 airmail.

Also available from the society's bookshop are the following from the same series:

Stained glass windows in St Mary's church, East Ilsley by Molly Kennedy

The origins of East Ilsley and its name by Nigel Wardell

Monumental inscriptions of East Ilsley (CD) by Eric Saxton

Transcripts of East Ilsley wills (CD) by Eric Saxton

East Ilsley parish council: the first 100 years by Bob Moulton

The Hildesley Brass by Eric Saxton

Members' interests

compiled by Bob Plumridge <bob@theplumridges.com>

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6017 BAILEY	Cobham	SRY	1650-1850	6101 COX	Cheam	SRY	1870+
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5929 BELCHER	Goosey	BRK	all	6098 DAVIS	Faringdon	BRK	1750-1850
5929 BELCHER	Stanford in the Vale	BRK	all	6101 DENNIS	Windsor	BRK	all
1224 BETTS	Henley on Thames	OXF	17C	6101 DENNIS	Hungerford	BRK	pre 1800
5929 BINT	Goosey	BRK	all	6017 DEWEY	Littleport	CAM	1800-41
6017 BISHOP	Basonthorpe	NFK	1750-1804	1224 DREWETT	Headington	OXF	17C
1515 BONNER	Warborough	OXF	1750+	1224 DREWETT	Henley on Thames	OXF	18C
1515 BONNER	Benson	OXF	1750+	1224 DREWETT	Stanton St John	OXF	17C
5917 BROGDENS	Cumnor	BRK	1800+	6122 ELLINGTON	Chatham	KEN	pre 1900
6122 BROWN	Luton	BDF	pre 1830	1224 EMMETT	Harpsden	OXF	18C
6098 BROWN	Cricklade	WIL	1800-1900	1515 EVANS	Reading	BRK	1800+
6122 BURTON	Hampstead	MDX	pre 1900	5278 FAITHFUL(L)	Kintbury	BRK	all
6033 BUSBY	All	All	1900+	1224 FIPPES	Stanton St John	OXF	17C
6033 BUSBY	All	All	pre 1850	1224 FORD	Dorchester	OXF	18C
1224 CLANVIL	Dorchester	OXF	18C	6122 GALVIN	Athlone	IRL	pre 1830
6033 COGGINS	All	OXF	pre 1850	6017 GOODALL	Bradfield	BRK	1870-1900
6033 COLE	All	GLS	pre 1850	1224 GREENWAY	Cholsey	BRK	18C
6017 COOPER	Ely	CAM	1830-1881	1224 GREENWAY	Dorchester	OXF	17C
6033 CORBETT	All	All	pre 1850	5350 GREGORY	All	BRK	1600+
6033 CORBETT	All	All	1870+	6033 HALE	All	All	1900+
				6033 HALE	All	All	pre 1850
				6098 HARDING	Benson	OXF	1700-1850

1224 HARMAN Cogges	OXF	18C	6063 PERRY Eaton Hastings	OXF	pre 1850
6098 HARRIS Brokenborough	WIL	1750-1850	1224 PERRYMAN Old Windsor	BRK	18C
6098 HAWKINS Kington St Michael			6033 PRICE all	all	pre 1850
	WIL	1800-1900	1224 PUTMAN Reading	BRK	19C
5350 HEDGES All	WIL	1600+	1224 RATHALL Harpsden	OXF	17C
5350 HEDGES All	BRK	1600+	6098 RICHARDS Tiverton	DEV	1700-1900
5350 HURST All	BRK	1600+	6098 RICHARDS	CANADA	1900-1910
1515 HYDE Reading	BRK	1890+	6098 RICHARDS Washfield	DEV	1700-1900
1515 HYDE Thatcham	BRK	1700+	6063 RICHE(R)S Ufford	SFK	1800-1900
6033 JACKMAN All	All	pre 1850	6063 RICHENS Wickham	BRF	1800-1900
6033 JACKMAN All	All	1900+	1224 RICHINGS Reading	BRK	19C
6098 JOHNSON Cricklade	WIL	1750-1850	1224 RICHINGS Henley on Thames		
5929 KEENE Goosey	BRK	all		OXF	20C
5929 KEENE Stanford in the Vale			6122 RUMBALL Luton	BDF	pre 1940
	BRK	all	6098 RUSS Sutton Benger	WIL	1700-1850
5278 KEWELL Ecchinswell	HAM	1700-1900	6017 SELLWOOD Bradfield	BRK	1600-1800
5929 KING Goosey	BRK	all	6017 SELLWOOD Chieveley	BRK	1600-1800
5929 KING Stanford in the Vale			6017 SELWOOD Bradfield	BRK	1600-1800
	BRK	all	6098 SKINNER Charlton	WIL	1750-1850
6063 LANCASTER Eggington	BDF	1700-1900	1224 SMITH Reading	BRK	19C
6033 LAPPER All	All	pre 1850	6063 SPINK Croydon	SRY	1860-1930
1224 LOWE Burcot with Dorchester			1224 STUBBLE Wokingham	BRK	17C
	OXF	18C	6122 SUGGET Wyke Regis	DOR	pre 1920
1224 LOWE Henley on Thames			6063 SWATTON Wickham	BRK	1780-1860
	OXF	18C	1224 TAYLOR Rotherfield Greys		
6122 LUCAS Dorchester	DOR	pre 1940		OXF	19C
6098 MANNERS Calne	WIL	1700-1850	5929 TIMMS Goosey	BRK	all
1224 MARLOW Henley on Thames			5929 TIMMS Stanford in the Vale		
	OXF	19C		BRK	all
1224 MARLOW Reading	BRK	19C	6122 TYNAN Cork	IRL	pre 1830
1224 MARLOW Old Windsor	BRK	18C	1224 WALTER(S) Henley on Thames		
6122 MARTIN Marlow	BKM	pre 1920		OXF	18C
6101 MASSEY Chalfont St Giles	BKM	all	1224 WALTER(S) Rotherfield Greys		
1224 MESSENGER Henley on Thames				OXF	18C
	OXF	18C	5929 WENMAN Stanford in the Vale		
1224 NASH Wokingham	BRK	17C		BRK	all
1224 NASH Henley on Thames			5929 WENMAN Goosey	BRK	all
	OXF	17C	1224 WERNHAM Reading	BRK	19C
6098 NASH Hurst	BRK	1700-1850	1224 WERNHAM Denham	BKM	19C
6033 NEALE all	BRK	pre 1800	1224 WERNHAM Beenham	BRK	19C
6033 NEALE all	all	1900+	1515 WHITE Stokenchurch	BKM	1800+
6098 NEVILLE Alvescot	OXF	1750-1850	6098 WILLIAMS Compton Bassett	WIL	1700-1850
1224 PARKER Henley on Thames			6098 WILLIAMS Cherhill	WIL	1700-1850
	OXF	17C	6122 WILLIAMS Gillingham	KEN	pre 1900
1224 PARSONS Old Windsor	BRK	18C	6122 WINDEBANK Pancras	MDX	pre 1940
1224 PEBWORTH Dorchester	OXF	18C	6122 WINDEBANK		
1224 PERRIE Caversham	OXF	18C		Hampstead	MDX pre 1930
1224 PERRIE Harpsden	OXF	18C	6101 WROTH Clewer	BRK	all
6063 PERRIS Wickham	BRK	1700-1900			

Members' services

Berks FHS Research Centre
Yeomanry House
131 Castle Hill
Reading, Berks RG1 7TJ
<www.berksfhs.org.uk>

The Research Centre comprises two floors, with books, films and microfiche on the first floor in the library, and the administration, signing-in desk and the computer suite on the ground floor. The centre is open to members and the general public as follows:

Tuesdays 10.00 - 16.00, 19.30 - 21.30
 Wednesdays and Thursdays 10.00 - 16.00
 2nd and 4th Sundays each month 11.00 - 16.00

All staff on duty are volunteers who help researchers in the centre, but they do not carry out research for the visitors. Visitors can join the society when in the centre or through the website.

The computer suite includes two computers set up specifically for the Ancestry Library edition, for which a nominal charge of £1.00 per hour is made. This gives access to all the the census returns from 1841 to 1901 plus anything and everything else available through Ancestry. These are topped up by some other counties' census returns dated 1861, 1871 and 1891 and the 1881 census returns for the whole of the UK, including the Channel Isles and the Royal Navy, on all the computers. Also held electronically are the Vital Records Indexes for the UK and some other parts of Europe, the National Burial Index and the more up to date Berkshire Burial Index, and much other material by county, either in the memory or accessed by inserting the relevant CD-ROMs. The Berkshire Name Index is available on all the computers.

In the reference library are held copies of almost every England and Wales 1851 census return transcribed and issued as indexes in booklet or on fiche, together with the

Berkshire census returns for 1851 to 1881 on film. All other England and Wales county fiche holdings, such as parish register transcriptions, are in the reference library, together with books covering every county, plus much on Scotland, Ireland, the Commonwealth and north American countries. The library catalogue can be browsed online.

Research Centre tours

The next tours are to held be on:
 Saturday 16 September 14.30 to 16.30
 Monday 20 November 19.30 to 21.30

How to find us

We are close to the centre of Reading, next door to the Berkshire Record Office and in the same building as the Reading Register Office. The station is a 15-minute walk away, and we are on more than one bus route. There is good parking: follow the signs to the Berkshire Record Office.

Berks FHS bookshop

The bookshop is on the ground floor, and is always open during centre opening hours. Purchases can be made and paid for by cash or cheque backed up by a cheque card. The bookshop is also available for purchases on our website, which lists the most commonly required publications. Publications for sale include those for beginners as well as for more established family historians. We hold publications on Berkshire family and local history, particularly those published by local societies, whether in print, fiche or electronic format.

The Berkshire Name Search (BNS)

This is the master index for all the following indices. To search this index you may:

- do your own search at the Research Centre
- visit a Berks FHS stand at a family history fair
- request a postal search

The BNS consists of the following:

Berkshire censuses and indexes

1851 census transcription, fully checked, of the 173,748 persons within Berkshire on the night of 30 March.

1861 census transcription and index includes most individuals (the town of Reading is the major exception).

1871 census transcription and index is completed and mainly checked.

1881 census transcription and index is fully checked.

Printouts can be made as required from all these transcriptions.

Berkshire Marriage Index

Work is in progress transcribing and checking all pre-1837 parish registers, with over 95,000 entries now available. Note that the early register entries only give dates and names of the groom and bride. Later entries include their parish if applicable, and whether married by licence.

Berkshire Burial Index

Work continues transcribing all Berkshire burial registers, with over 447,000 entries to date. Some 50% of the entries show all the data available. The rest show (where available) name, age, relationship, occupation and title together with a note indicating if there is further information such as date, place or cause of death in the original record. The fourth edition of the index is available on CD-ROM from the bookshop.

Berkshire Strays Index

This dataset includes 20,500 people recorded in events taking place outside Berkshire if the person has some reference to Berkshire. Strays records come from a variety of sources

including the 1851 censuses of several neighbouring counties. No further additions are being made to this index.

Berkshire Miscellaneous Index

This dataset is based on the former Berkshire Name Index and includes 100,279 records that were extracted and submitted by individuals.

When possible, running sets (such as baptisms from a parish register) will be placed in specialist datasets, leaving the disparate individual records and small datasets in this miscellaneous index. The amount of information available depends upon the record.

Postal search

Send your request to the Berkshire Name Search, Berks FHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ enclosing a cheque for the charge, together with your email address or an A4-sized stamped (UK stamps only) self-addressed envelope and two IRCs.

Charges

To search the BNS send £2 per surname requested to obtain the number of entries in each census or index. This search will not provide any information from the records.

To obtain the full details from the records, printed on an A4 sheet (up to 25 entries or lines; we will advise the additional costs if more entries are found) send:

- £2 per surname per requested database
- £5 per surname to search all databases currently available (price will increase as more databases are included).

Records wanted

If you have records of any names that would fit into the Berkshire Miscellaneous Index (event occurs within Berkshire pre- and post-1974), please send them by post to Berks FHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ or by email to <miscindex@berksfhs.org.uk>.

Birth Briefs Index

Birth Briefs are five-generation ancestral charts submitted by members of the society. Fully completed charts contain the names and vital records (birth or christening, marriage and death or burial) of the member and up to 30 ancestors.

You can search the index, currently 28,595 names, on the website or for £2 per surname by post. You can order a copy of a particular Birth Brief for £2. Quote the ID no. obtained from the website or from the postal search. The Birth Brief can be sent as a hard copy, in PAF Pedigree format or as a file in GEDCOM format.

Please post search requests and orders for copies to Berks FHS (BB), Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ. Mark your envelope BB and include the ID no. if known. Enclose a sterling cheque, drawn on a UK bank, your email address and an A4 self-addressed envelope either stamped or containing two IRCs.

You can contact the person submitting the Birth Brief if they are still a member. We will pass on a letter, or email if they have an email address. (See website.)

To contact the person submitting the Birth Brief you may either:

- send your letter with two unstamped envelopes, one self-addressed and one blank, with three IRCs (not stamps) to Berks FHS (BBxxxx) at Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TG
- email your message to BBxxxx@berksfhs.org.uk (where xxxx is the BB ID no.)

The No.1 Supplier to Genealogists for Microfiche Readers **Why You Need A Microfiche Reader**

Contrary to popular belief, not all information is available on CD. There is a vast amount of research and records that are only available on microfiche. The information on a microfiche compliments that on a CD.

A microfiche is often cheaper than a CD. Microfiches are available to search small areas of information whereas a CD you have to search a huge complicated database.

Most microfiches are copies of the original documents. You can check what the original documents actually showed – very useful in the case of name changes, spelling mistakes or not clearly written details. Microfiche readers are small and compact, user friendly –switch on, insert the microfiche and you are on your way.



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