

# Berkshire Family Historian

*the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society*

*Please note that personal contact details have been redacted from this online edition. To contact a named individual please email <editor@berksfhs.org.uk>.*

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## *Family names appearing in this issue*

Allen 25	Dyer 30	Humphreys 25	Nash 25	Stowers 25
Balfour 10	Edmonds 25	Hunt 13	Nation 25	Sydall 13
Barlow 13	French 19	Jackson 23	Nelson 22	Tigwell 31
Bates 17	Gardner 25	Jones 25	Newbery 30	Townshend 22
Beaver 25	George 10	Kerensky 10	Norcott 25	Walker 25
Biddard 25	Goddard 8	Lay 13, 31	Orput 25	Walter 15
Breadmore 8	Goodbody 31	Lee 30	Palmer 25	Waters 25
Brown 25	Green 16	Lezain 21	Pearse 25	Whichello 8
Bullock 31	Gurnett 15	Lockhart 10	Plastow 25	White 22
Burton 25	Habbard 25	MacIntyre 23	Randall 17	Wilder 21
Campbell 23	Hall 8	Mackellar 21	Reynolds 22	Williams 25
Cherry 15	Halls 8	Macleod 23	Richardson 25	Willis 25
Clarke 22	Hardy 22	McQuhae 13	Samples 25	Wooldridge 10
Cusack 31	Hester 25	Millis 25	Smart 25	
Cutter 25	Hill 25	Mitford 21	Smith 16, 25	
Dodman 16	Hobbs 25	Morris 25	Starr 19	
Drewitt 25	Hood 25	Napp 25	Storie 27	

# Chairman's corner

## Writing for the future

It's strange to think about events yet to come, events that will be history before you read this page. A glance through the window, in search of inspiration, reveals Berkshire deep in snow. Copy dates for the *Berkshire Family Historian* can create some surreal moments.

Earlier in January I had been talking with Anne Diamond on BBC Radio Berkshire about diaries, and what wonderful resources they can be for family historians. Berkshire diarists have described some memorably snowy starts to past years: in 1776, in 1814, and again in 1881, when drifts lay 15 feet deep in places, temperatures plunged to -17°C and a thaw took nine days to arrive. All of which got me thinking, how many of you have recorded how 2010 began, and subsequent events in your lives so far this year? You enjoy reading your ancestors' accounts of times past; what will your descendants discover about you when looking back to life in the twenty-first century?

## Links with far-flung members (1)

It always surprises me that only one member in three subscribes to the online Discussion List. Whether or not you live close to Berkshire, what an invaluable resource this is for members. Looking through some recent posts, what strikes me is how sound advice and information accompany good humour. You might be a newcomer to family history or an old hand, but either way, you can only gain from the collective expertise and contributions of current subscribers. Eleven years of archived messages await you too, instantly searchable by name, place or topic – truly a treasure trove of material. Thanks go to Joan Vinall, for overseeing day-to-day list matters, and Terry Wickenden, who updates the archive each month. Contact <listowner@berksfhs.org.uk> and ensure that you too enjoy all the benefits.



## Links with far-flung members (2)

Apologies to Australian members if your ears have been burning recently, but people have been talking about you. The website working group and its page-authors have been thinking through every page with you in mind, in the sense that not everyone has on-the-spot knowledge of Berkshire. So, advice on finding places, explaining how they fit together, and adding some details about them have been priorities. Our new site will be up and working quite soon now, and will be a first call whether you have Berkshire ancestors or interests elsewhere in the UK. Check for news of the switchover on <www.berksfhs.org.uk> in coming weeks.

## More words of thanks

I should like to thank everyone who volunteered to help on the society's stands at Bracknell's Family History Fair and the UK's biggest family history show, *Who Do You Think You Are? Live*, at Olympia, both scheduled to take place between writing this piece and the magazine's publication.

## Society Annual General Meeting

Your magazine carries advice of the society's 35th AGM on 23 June, to be hosted by Newbury Branch, with a talk from Michael Gandy to follow. Your society seeks a new

committee member or two to bring their initiative, insight and imagination to some key tasks. Are you up for the challenge? Get your nomination form back to Valerie Storie by 28 May.

### Could you be the one who makes the difference?

People just like you – people on whose active support your society can rely – are vitally important. To work effectively, the services which benefit all members need committed

volunteers behind them. Highlighting just three areas: opportunities exist for more Research Centre assistants to help Arthur Beech at Yeomanry House, for extra project workers and, especially, for members with computing and IT skills. Could you be someone who makes a real difference? Whether from home, on site, in or out of county? The inside front cover has contact details – so let us know exactly how you could help.

**Derek Trinder**

### **Paul Brooks (1953 - 2009)**

The society learned with great sadness of the death of Paul Brooks, who died on 24 November 2009, aged just 56. A number of BerksFHS members, including representatives from the Executive Committee and the Computer Branch, attended the funeral. Paul was the Computer Branch's programme secretary, and he also helped Chad Hanna with updating the static pages of the website. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

### **Bracknell Family History Fair**

***On 31 January at Bracknell the society did well to match last year's revenue at £639, when overall visitor numbers were slightly down. Ticket sales for the talks were 70, compared with 100 last year. However CD and book sales were up by 10.6 per cent from £452 to just over £500.***

***Two people joined the society on the day, 70 membership forms were taken (coded, so traceable) and 38 temporary membership cards were offered to non-members to encourage them to visit the Research Centre.***

### **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The 35th Berkshire Family History Society Annual General Meeting, with annual reports from the chairman and treasurer, will be held before the Newbury Branch meeting to start at 7.30pm on Wednesday 23 June 2010 in St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Shaw, Newbury RG14 2DS. (See <[www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk)> and note that the hall cannot be accessed via Love Lane).

If you would like to nominate a member to the Executive please let the secretary know, in writing, by Friday 28 May. Nomination forms may be obtained from the secretary, at branch meetings or downloaded from <[berksfhs.org.uk](http://berksfhs.org.uk)>. Please ensure that the person you nominate is prepared to sit on the Executive Committee and be a trustee of the charity. All nominations should be seconded. Information about being a trustee of a charity and what it entails can be found on <[www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)> (publication CC3). Certain people are not able to be a trustee:

- Persons under the age of 18
- Anyone convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty unless the conviction is spent
- Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt
- Anyone who has been removed from the trusteeship of a charity
- Anyone who is disqualified from being a company director.

Of the current Executive Committee, Margaret Brenchley and Sally-Ann Jay have signified that they are unwilling to seek re-nomination.

# Around the branches

## *Bracknell and Wokingham Branch*

<bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk>

Bracknell members needed every ounce of Christmas spirit to survive their festive branch get-together. The booking, made a year in advance and twice checked, was somehow bumped off to accommodate a wedding. The date proved to be one of the coldest nights for many a month, with a good fall of snow. Many members were unable to get out of their roads. In the end the celebration comprised 17 hardy souls and a couple who drove their mother to the event and decided not to go home. The heating in the hall was inadequate and could not be adjusted. Coats were kept on!

The branch is setting up a system of library representatives in the Bracknell and Wokingham districts to link with Berks FHS and to help promote family history amongst library users. The representatives will help with distributing posters and leaflets and maintaining family history noticeboards. Drop-in sessions at local libraries continue, and are spreading out to other branches and libraries.

John Feast has been giving a series of talks at Sandhurst,

scheduled for completion at the end of February.

## *Computer Branch*

<computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk>

The Computer Branch talk at Twyford Library in November attracted only three attendees: two library visitors and a representative from Wokingham Library Service. However one of the visitors has now joined the society. A more successful drop-in session at Woodley Library on 17 November drew eight, two of whom have now joined the society. In 2010 the drop-in sessions at Woodley will continue on the second Tuesday afternoon of each month.

## *Newbury Branch*

<newbury@berksfhs.org.uk>

Following last July's meeting (reported in the September *Historian*) a West Berks Heritage Forum has been formed, aiming to identify local heritage, generate and support ideas for projects, share good practice, and to act as a facilitator, focal point and information resource.

Newbury Branch has joined the forum, and has submitted its programme details to the quarterly newsletter. It will

also contribute editorial on relevant local history matters such as transcriptions, MIs and collaboration with other projects.

## *Reading Branch*

<reading@berksfhs.org.uk>

Reading branch members are being urged by their chairman to think about joining the branch committee. A couple of existing members must soon stand down, having served five years, and without fresh blood the committee will struggle to keep the branch going.

In particular someone is needed to volunteer as branch treasurer. The job is not onerous, says Margaret Crook, because the society's overall treasurer, Gordon Spencer, has it all under control, and the retiring branch treasurer, Graham Holt, will help with the transition.

Since May 2007 John Price, former chairman of the Reading Branch, has been talking about family history to Women's Institutes, church groups, coffee clubs and the like in church or village halls or drop-in centres and even once in somebody's house. The 45- to 60-minute talk is aimed at beginners, emphasizing how family history is not just about how far you can get back with your tree, but also

about finding out how our ancestors lived and why events occurred. The talks serve as an advertisement for Berks FHS, stressing that we are not just Berkshire but more your local family history society. The talks are usually followed by lively one-to-one discussions.

Also under the wing of the Reading Branch, John Price has done three drop-in sessions at Sonning Common Library. These have been day-long, and have been part of the South Oxfordshire education programme.

## Vale of White Horse Branch

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk>

Attendance at the Christmas meeting was depleted by flu, but the 10 who attended enjoyed a quiz, raffle, Christmas fare and a glass of mulled wine.

The best-attended meetings of 2009 were October, when Dr Gillian White talked about Bess of Hardwick to an audience of 48, and March, when Jean Debney advised 40 members on how to date their old photos.

## Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

<windsor@berksfhs.org.uk>

The branch Christmas celebration involved 30 members going to the local Toby Carvery, for informal chat about family history over dinner.

Highest attendance of 2009 was September, when 51 members and guests heard Sharon Hintze talk on the LDS Hyde Park Record Centre.

# Berkshire Burial Index update

The parishes and periods which have been added to the Berkshire Burial Index since the position shown in the December 2009 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are set out below.

Aston Tirrold St Michael 1728 - 1812  
Clewer St Andrew 1908-14  
Drayton St Peter 1863 - 1919  
Newbury Shaw Cemetery 1913-21 and 1930-40  
Reading London Road Cemetery (burials in unconsecrated ground) 1895-98, 1900-01, 1910-13 and 1933-35  
Reading St Mary 1960-95  
Stanford in the Vale St Denys 1894 - 1946  
Sutton Courtenay All Saints 1775-96  
Tilehurst St Michael 1941-55

These will be included in the next update of the CD which we aim to issue towards the end of 2010. The whole index now contains more than 679,000 entries (670,000 on eighth edition CD). Details of the services for researching burials in the Berkshire Burial Index are given on pages 34-35.

**David Wright**

## Berkshire Burial Index 8th edition on CD

**The 8th edition, published in November 2009, contains more than 670,000 indexed records from the registers of 200+ Berkshire parishes.**



**Now available by mail order from BerksFHS Books for £16.80 (UK) or £18.45 (overseas) Updates from 5th, 6th and 7th editions also available at lower rates.**

**See mail order booklist in centre pages.**

## Dates for your 2010 diary

date	event	venue	more details
Sat 26 - Sun 28 Feb	<i>Who Do You Think You Are? Live</i>	Olympia London W14 8DU	< <a href="http://www.bbcwhodoyouthinkyouare.com">www.bbcwhodoyouthinkyouare.com</a> >
Fri 9 - Sun 11 April	Guild of One-Name Studies conference and AGM	Oxford Belfry Hotel Thame OX9 2JW	< <a href="http://www.one-name.org">www.one-name.org</a> >
18.00-20.00 Tue 13 April	BRO special opening for Berks FHS members	BRO Coley Ave Reading RG1 6AF	BRO 0118 901 5132
10.00-16.00 Sat 17 April	Gloucestershire FHS open day	Crypt School, Podsmead Rd, Tuffley, Gloucester	< <a href="http://gfhs.org.uk">http://gfhs.org.uk</a> >
Sun 25 April	South Coast family history fair	Worthing	< <a href="http://www.familyhistoryfairs.org">www.familyhistoryfairs.org</a> >
19 June	Wiltshire FHS open day	Salisbury	< <a href="http://www.wiltshirefhs.co.uk">www.wiltshirefhs.co.uk</a> >

## Birth briefs

Birth Briefs are five-generation ancestral charts submitted by members of the society. They contain the names and vital records (birth or christening, marriage and death or burial) of the member and up to 30 ancestors. All members are encouraged to submit and update their birth briefs, which can be very useful to other family researchers.

A form for compiling your birth brief can be downloaded from <[www.berksfhs.org.uk/birthbriefs](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/birthbriefs)>, where you can also search the Birth Briefs Index, currently standing at 31,441 names, or you can order a search by post for £2.

If you have an interest in a name on a Birth Brief you can order a copy by post (on paper, or as a digital file in either PAF Pedigree or GEDCOM) for £2. See full details on the website or in your Members' Handbook.

Orders for searches or copies of briefs should be posted to

**Alan Brooker**

***Please be sure to advise any change of contact details to the membership secretary, at the address on the inside front cover. We receive many enquiries via the website, and it is much faster and more economical if we can forward them to the relevant member by email.***



# Website progress

**Chad Hanna**

## Paul Brooks

I can't mention the website without paying a personal tribute to the late Paul Brooks, who maintained the pages on the existing website, and did an excellent job as programme secretary for the Computer Branch. I remember him well for his too-few talks, which combined excellent illustrations with real information, laced with an engaging style. I've heard many speakers over the years, and Paul was certainly in my top ten.

## Existing website

The existing website still needs to be maintained, and that takes time. The programme and event pages need to be kept up to date, as do the new membership pages each quarter. Whilst I'm working on the new website I'm still pleased to be advised of anything which needs correction on the old one.

## New website

As I write this in early January, I'm very conscious of how much still needs to be done before the new site goes live, even though a lot has already been achieved. We (the team) have set ourselves quite a challenge in providing an article for every Berkshire parish listed in *Phillimore's Atlas and Index of Parish Registers*. We ran two two-hour training courses before Christmas to help branch volunteers to write articles and update the programme on the new site. To try and reach more members, I have created some videos based on the course, which you can find on YouTube at

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zCuWpoRAsE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zCuWpoRAsE)>  
about exploring the new Berkshire FHS website

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4Pp-yIY2CM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4Pp-yIY2CM)>  
about writing an article for the Berkshire FHS website

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FrvoOKLtxM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FrvoOKLtxM)>  
about adding a image to an article

<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQrBnH1COFA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQrBnH1COFA)>  
about adding a link to an article.

(There will also be links from the society website.)

I'm sure we will much further forward when you read this, but there will still be a need for more articles about Berkshire places, particularly parishes created during Victorian times, non-conformist chapels, and other places of interest. Please email <[webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk)> if you would like to help by writing an article about the place where you live or the place your family came from.

Finally, I do hope that the existing website will be the new website when you read this, but if it isn't, it shouldn't be too long before you will be able to use it.

**ONLINE  
DISCUSSION  
LIST**

**Questions, answers, tips, news and friendly  
chat between members, every day**

**To join contact <[listowner@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:listowner@berksfhs.org.uk)>**



## A passion for projects

***Margaret Young (3529) took over as the society's projects co-ordinator last year. Here she introduces herself and her enthusiasm for family history***

### ***How did you start family history?***

I started in January 1988 when my seven-year old son bought a book in which he could stick pictures of himself, his family, his pets, and his interests. I (foolishly) said I had some things at home that he could put in there.

From then on we were hooked. We visited the local graves of my parents and grandparents, as I (thought I) knew we were all from Reading, as well as those of my husband's family, as he too knew that most of his were also from Reading. Family history had always been something I had wanted to do and now I had an incentive.

### ***Have you always lived in Berkshire?***

Yes, I've lived in Tilehurst since I was five, having previously lived with my grandparents in Southcote.

### ***Where did your ancestors originate?***

Not from Reading. My father's father was a coachman from Norfolk, and his mother, Mary Jane Hall, was descended from the Whichellos of Wallingford. She just added an S to her name when she married John Halls in 1890.

My mother's mother was a Goddard, descended from the Goddards of Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire. My mother's father was William Henry Breadmore, descended from the Breadmore family from Mildenhall, Wiltshire and before that from Great Bedwyn.

### ***What is your main interest in family history?***

As I researched the Breadmore family I realised that it was rather a rare name, and that the majority of them were in the Hungerford and Swindon area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I started noting all sightings of the name, and gradually realised they were nearly all connected. This has now become a one name study and is registered with the Guild of One Name Studies. I have a Breadmore website, where I tell various Breadmore stories, ask questions, explain the expansion of the family and also list 88 ways in which the name has been mis-transcribed or written throughout time.

### ***How and when did you get involved with Berkshire FHS and projects?***

We joined the society in the early 1990s when we discovered just how many ancestors came from the county. I've been an assistant at the Research Centre since 1998 and a member of the Research Centre committee for the last two years. Some years ago I entered all the 20,000 Strays from paper onto a database, and I've also transcribed various documents.

I've also been attending Executive Committee meetings for two years as the minutes secretary, but had no input in the proceedings. (Those who know me will realise how difficult that was for me.) At the 2009 AGM I was elected to the Executive Committee and became a trustee, so I could take a full part in the proceedings. I was then asked if I would become the projects co-ordinator.





*Recording MIs for the society. A graveyards may seem an unlikely place to find new friends, but working on projects like these will introduce you to people who share your interests.*

### *How can other members get involved with projects?*

There are various projects and a variety of ways of becoming involved. Many of you will know of the Berkshire Burial Index, which is available on CD and now contains 670,000 records. The Berkshire Strays Index and the Marriage Index are both in the Berkshire Name Search on the Research Centre computers. A Baptism Index and a Pedigree Index are also being compiled. Members' Birth Briefs are on the society website, and Reading BMDs are being transcribed for the UKBMD website. Parish registers are being transcribed, and some nonumental inscriptions are being recorded and photographed. These projects usually result in publication on CDs, which are sold by the society.

None of this happens without volunteers who transcribe, check the transcriptions, check the checking, scan documents, type information into spreadsheets, manipulate the information into suitable format for the CD, write histories of parishes and take photographs. There isn't always work for every volunteer all the time, so some people may be waiting for a while between tasks.

If you have a particular interest, or you are transcribing a register for your own research, do please check first that it has not already

been completed. If you have already completed a register, please tell us if you would be willing to share your work by donating a copy to the society. I was told recently of a member who had transcribed the whole of a parish for personal research purposes. When I suggested that the transcript could be used for a future CD the reply was that it had all been done again, as no-one knew about the original work.

Much of the transcription and typing can be sent anywhere in the world, so distance is no problem. However, the important task of checking transcriptions against original documents can only be undertaken by those living within easy distance of the Berkshire Record Office. More people are needed for this stage of publication – do you live near enough to help?

Volunteers are vital to our society, and one of my favourite sayings is: *volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless but because they are priceless*. If you would like to become one please contact me, either by email or phone. My details are inside the front cover of this issue.

Breadmore One Name Study

<[www.breadmore.org](http://www.breadmore.org)>

Guild of One Name Studies

<[www.one-name.org](http://www.one-name.org)>

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**Project success story** *At the January meeting of the Computer Branch Gillian Stevens reported that the transcripts of the 1851 census for Berkshire are now up and running on <[www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)> and – thanks to work carried out by Berks FHS volunteers – earning good money for the society.*

*Gillian is now involved in a project to transcribe Births, Marriages and Deaths At Sea 1854-88. Unlike GRO indexes, these entries are complete, and therefore searchable, so there is no need to send off for a certificate. This is an online project using your computer and the internet. Contact Gillian on <[computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk)> if you are interested in helping.*

**David Wooldridge (6835)  
describes his research into  
the eventful life of his  
grandfather, Walter, and  
how the story was told to  
BBC Radio Berkshire**

My grandfather Walter Wooldridge was a trawler skipper from Grimsby who joined the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) in the First World War. I hardly knew him, because he died from wounds received during the Second World War when I was only two years old.

I must have been about nine or ten when, from the back of a wardrobe, my grandmother produced a silver-topped, black walking stick. It had been Kerensky's, she said, and he had given it to my grandfather. At that time I had no idea who Kerensky was, but I now know that he was instrumental in deposing Tsar Nicholas II, and joined, then led, the first Russian government afterwards. He didn't last very long, and was deposed by the Bolsheviks later in 1917. I was intrigued to find whether there really was a connection between my grandfather and Kerensky.

I mentioned this to Derek Trinder (we share Lincolnshire interests) who suggested some places I might look. He also asked me if I would consider telling the story of my research on BBC Radio Berkshire, first outlining my research objectives, and then returning a few weeks later to report on progress. To my surprise I found myself agreeing to do this, and soon I was at Caversham Park making my first live radio broadcast with Derek and presenter Sarah Walker.

A few days later I made my first visit to TNA, obtained my reader's card and was soon handling original documents marked TOP SECRET, with hand-written annotations by Prime Minister Lloyd George and another former PM, A J Balfour, (then Foreign Secretary) on reports from R B Lockhart, one of our spies in Russia during the First World War. Lockhart was reputed to have arranged

## It began with Kerensky's walking stick....

Kerensky's escape from Russia in 1918, after which Kerensky met Lloyd George secretly in London.

I searched various RNR records too, but couldn't find my grandfather's service details beyond a brief summary on microfilm, revealing that he had been mentioned in despatches for "especially good service in the White Sea". He had been awarded the MBE Military Division too, but there were no further details. I also found a document proving that Walter had been at Archangel in October 1917, leading an armed trawler flotilla. From previous research I knew that in 1919 he was an absentee voter, apparently away "minesweeping".

Among some inherited papers I discovered an undated newspaper report of the award of a silver cup to my grandfather, at the behest of the King of Denmark, for saving the crew of a Danish schooner in a storm in the North Sea in 1923. That same report also recorded that in 1918 Walter had arrived at Kirkwall in the Orkneys in an armed trawler with Kerensky aboard, and that Walter received the MBE in 1918 for secret service work between the UK and Russia.

Now I had at least circumstantial evidence, from a secondary source it is true, but still no primary source linking my grandfather with Kerensky.

Time for the second broadcast, for technical reasons, was shorter than the first. But such was the interest in the story that we were invited back for a third instalment the following week to fill in more detail.

By now we had widened the search to include Walter's Second World War service. Still in the RNR, he skippered the boom



*Walter Wooldridge*

***Are there some interesting stories in your family history too? Would you like to share some of your research with listeners to BBC Radio Berkshire? And then try to develop some of the stories further in later broadcasts? It's fun and it's friendly. Contact Derek Trinder at <[chairman@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman@berksfhs.org.uk)> to find out more.***

defence vessel *HMS Barfield* on the Clyde, and in 1940 was mentioned again in despatches. This was for his part in rescuing French sailors from the destroyer *Maillé Brézé* when one of her torpedoes was accidentally discharged into her superstructure while loading ammunition at Greenock. A fire started, trapping many crewmen below decks with the ever-present risk of further explosions. Later in the war Walter's ship was bombed, and in January 1945 he died aged 53 as a result of wounds received.

Over three live broadcasts I hope we provided some entertaining stories that have raised public awareness of family history in general and of the Berkshire Family History Society in particular. We also showed that the society can help and advise those researching ancestors who have no Berkshire links at all.

My search for Walter's RNR service record goes on. It may be missing for one of several reasons. It could be withheld for its secret service content. The fact that he served in both world wars could mean that his records are in a different record series, ADM 340, and I have still to look at these. I just hope that his papers were not among the tranches of secret service documents that were destroyed between 1909 and the early 1970s.

What else is planned? At Kew there are a many potentially relevant War Office, Foreign Office and Cabinet papers, all bound and referenced in best Civil Service manner, which makes it very hard to track down a specific document. I need to explore more of these, so further visits to TNA are imminent.

And there are more questions about my grandfather's life that I would still like to answer. When he was about 20, what was he doing in South Africa? Did he really buy a share in a gold mine? Why did he sail round the world from South Africa to Vancouver to deliver a trawler? How did he get back home? There are so many snippets like these that make research so interesting. If only I had asked those relatives while they were still alive!

# Coincidences *or* The tale of a photograph

Coincidences happen all the time, and in family history they seem to abound. Or are we just more aware of them?

I had seen an old photo of a farmhouse and people in funny clothes when I was but a child; my mother said it was where family had lived, but she didn't say where the place was. The photo came to light again after her death, and I filed it away carefully.

My mum's father came from Aldworth. He had been born in 1867, and his father, his grandfather and great-grandfather were the village wheelwrights. One day I saw in the newspaper that the Bell in Aldworth had been judged a CAMRA Best Pub, and had been in

*Family history research isn't all done in archives. As Valerie Storie (1953) demonstrates, groundwork on site can produce some remarkable results*

the same family for five generations; that cutting too was filed away.

Then in 1993, a fifth cousin from Oz went to Aldworth whilst staying with me, and took a photo of the Bell. It looked familiar – not unlike the farmhouse photo. Was it possible they were one and the same? Could the farmhouse actually be the rear of the pub?

In pursuit of my grandfather, who had died before I was born, I decided to go to Aldworth. The churchyard was full of my relations, and I thought the licensee might know the location of the wheelwright's house. I phoned and the conversation went thus:



*The Bell at Aldworth. Dating from about 1340, it was likely to have been a single hall at that time.*



*A medieval inscription on the wall of the Bell. Palaeographers may struggle to exercise their skill.*



*I'm studying family history ... my grand-father's family were wheelwrights ... where would the house have been?*

*Directly opposite the pub. What name are you are researching?*

*Hunt – George, James, then John, who was born in 1809, and his father William.*

*Ah, in that case we're distantly related.*

In fact the landlady Heather and I are fifth cousins, so I went to Aldworth. The wheelwright's house was by then in the possession of Rupert Allason, former MP and espionage novelist who writes under the name Nigel West. The house was heavily surrounded by security devices, so I didn't dare go too near;



*John Lay, great-great-grandfather of both the author and Dennis Lay*

even looking over the fence was decidedly dodgy. I went to the church and left my name in the visitors' book as John Hunt's great-great-granddaughter, and then went to the pub. No, the rear of the old building was not my farmhouse but, despite the disappointment, we had a wonderful time, for Heather was an ardent family researcher too. The pub had begun life in the fourteenth century, and one or two original features are still there. Heather had no idea where my farmhouse was, but she kept a copy in with her photos, just in case.

It turned out, in fact, that the Bell came into my family in 1763 when Mary Sydall, who had inherited it from her father the previous year, married William Barlow, who was my five-times great-grandfather. A marriage or two later a Hunt married a McQuhae (Heather's line) in 1836, and it has been with the McQuhaes ever since. So the Bell was in my family before Heather's, and it goes back more than five generations. I jokingly said I had come to claim my inheritance.

Three months went by, and I got an excited phone call from Heather, saying she had identified the farmhouse. A gentleman called Dennis Lay had gone into the pub the previous evening and, as Heather thought he was distantly related, they got talking family history. Out came the photos, and my farmhouse photo fluttered out. Dennis recognised it immediately – as his house, Princes Manor Farm in Harwell. It was built originally as a manor house for the Black Prince in the fourteenth century (1330-76) – hence the similarity with the Bell. It was bought by John Lay,



*Princes Manor Farm:*

*top, taken about 1896, as judged from the clothing (persons unknown)*



*below, taken in 1994 from approximately the same camera position, showing the present owners, Dennis Lay and family, standing in similar positions to the original photo.*

*Benjamin Hunt, my great-great uncle, c1874-6 judging by the size of the children. He's standing outside the wheelwright's house, adjacent to the well, sunk in 1868. At around 370ft deep it was the deepest well in England. It was opposite the Bell, and John Hunt 1809-82 (Benjamin's father) was on the parish council and was instrumental in its planning.*



Dennis' great-great-grandfather in the early 1840s, and the Lays still live and farm there. John Lay also happens to be my great-great-grandfather on my mum's maternal side, so Dennis and I are half-third cousins; he is descended from John's second marriage, and I have come down from his first marriage.

Subsequently I went to a family reunion at Princes Manor Farm, where there were 165 people present, all related to me in some way or another, and I only had met five of them previously. Hence the decision that a computer was called for, rather than the proverbial shoebox.



**For many years *John Gurnett* was editor of  
The Times index, the delights of which  
he introduces here.  
He was also, of course, the previous editor  
of the Berkshire Family Historian**

# Past Times

When John Walter launched his newspaper, the *Daily Universal Register*, on 1 January 1785 to publicise his new printing process, he could not have known that more than two centuries later this newspaper, now known as *The Times*, would be launched online, allowing everyone to read the news in detail, from the French Revolution and the American Civil War to the world wars of the twentieth century. The online archive is a searchable database of 200 years, from the paper's launch in 1785 until 1985, covering major world events, display and front-page advertisements, "hatches, matches and dispatches", as well as memorial and funeral services with lists of mourners.

Then as now, most newspapers readers demanded sensation, so on entering your name in the index you may well find a farmer selling his wife by auction, or the death of an 105-year-old inmate of the Camberwell workhouse. I found a singular case of someone with my own surname in the issue of 8 December 1879: James Gurnett appeared at Southwark magistrates' court charged with pawning his daughter's boots.

The prisoner had been summoned by the school board authorities for neglecting to send the girl to school and, in default of paying the fine, had been committed to prison. While he was there his wife, a poor, hard-working woman, failed to keep the child at school, and her excuse was that she had no boots for the girl. The mistress supplied her with boots, and the child attended school until her father was released –

whereupon he took the boots, pledged them and got drunk with the proceeds. As he had recently served a prison sentence he was jailed for one day.

Sometimes *The Times* reported gems from the local press. One of 1856 involved Mrs Cherry, wife of the rector of Burghfield, who was abducted by her husband after "domestic difficulties having led to his separation". The following day she escaped from the vicarage to

Southampton Street in Reading, where a super-intendant, accompanied by two police officers, forced her into a carriage as she screamed "Is there no one to save me?" The case raised a local outcry, and ended in the divorce court two years later.

This treasure trove is not free to everyone; a monthly subscription costs £14.95 and an annual one £74.95, but members of Reading Library\* can use it from home without cost. Visit <[www.readinglibraries.org.uk](http://www.readinglibraries.org.uk)>, choose *Links*, then *Times Digital Archive*, and enter your library barcode number. Search for the item you require with a keyword and approximate dates, and wait for a list of news, features, or other sections of the newspaper to appear.

*\*You do not have to live in Reading to join Reading Library. All that is required is that you call in with two proofs of identity. Alternatively, give your local public library a call to find out if they run a similar service.*

# By hook or by crook...

**A chance find  
in a Sunday  
market propelled  
Margaret Brenchley  
(4272) into the family  
history of total  
strangers – with a  
heart-warming  
result**

It is more than two years since my sister-in-law found an autograph book at Ilkley's Sunday antique market. It was very impressive, in that the verses and the illustrations that accompanied them were of high quality. The inscription on the first page indicated that the book had been given to Florence by Frank. One of the further verses suggested the recipient was Florence Dodman. Stamford was one of the places frequently mentioned by those signing off their verses.

My sister-in-law felt the book was of such quality that it ought to go back to the family, if possible, and she enlisted my help in tracing them. I have to admit that this book with its red cover carefully wrapped in tissue paper sat on a shelf in my study for many months until I finally did something about it.

Using the 1901 and the 1891 census returns and FreeBMD online it was easy to work up a family tree for Florence. She was the youngest of 12 children of Robert and Sarah Dodman. At the time of the 1901 census Robert was a printer and compositor in Stamford, and Florence was a draper's assistant.

I decided to enlist the local press, and sent a letter to the *Stamford Mercury* asking for descendants of Florence's family to get in contact with me, adding that if they could prove they were her relatives, they could have the autograph book. A week later, having just returned from a few days away, I got a phone

call from the most unlikely source – a friend Pauline, whom I have known for years, and who lives about a mile away from Stamford. She had been extremely surprised on opening her copy of the *Mercury* to see a letter from me. She was intrigued, as she knew of the Dodmans when she lived there in her childhood; they had at one time owned the cinema and various shops around the town. She agreed that if there was no response to my letter she would take the book to Stamford and donate it to the local museum.

Within the next week two letters arrived, both with interesting information about the family. Both ladies gave me details of their grandparents. One grandparent was Florence's brother Charles Frederick Dodman and the other her sister Eliza Roberts Dodman; she had married a Mr Green, who owned a shop in the High Street at one time. Charles' granddaughter sent me a copy of the family bible's births, marriages and deaths, which confirmed and added to my information. Eliza's granddaughter told me of her artistic grandfather Mr Green and his equally artistic son. She also told me that Florence had married, moved to London, and had two children. One of them had had one child, but their surname was Smith, and she didn't hold out any hope of finding the daughter of that marriage, as the family had lost touch, and indeed she may have been dead.

The next decision was not as difficult as it might seem, and I didn't make any attempt to search for Florence's granddaughter. Though both correspondents had the same relationship to Florence, the fact that so many of the illustrations and the verses were by members of the Green family, it was obvious that Eliza's granddaughter should be the one to have the book. I phoned her to tell her of my decision, but asked that she let the other person who had contacted me see the album, since she had been kind enough to respond. I promised I would find a way to get the album to her other than by mail.

My friend agreed to take the album on her

next visit to Grantham. She was amazed to discover that the recipient turned out to be her former Sunday School teacher. As the visit to Grantham, where my correspondent lived, wasn't immediate I had an anxious call from Eliza's granddaughter, but I was able to reassure her that one day she would not only be reunited with the book, but with a former Sunday School pupil. I didn't know my friend's maiden name, so couldn't tell her who it was other than Pauline. Eventually Pauline delivered the album, and they both enjoyed

reminiscing about old acquaintances. The family were absolutely delighted to have such personal treasures of verses and sketches by their grandfather and other relatives. Particularly touched was Eliza's young great-grandson, who of course never knew his great-grandparents.

On my last visit to Yorkshire my sister-in-law had acquired some more interesting family scrapbooks and documents, so I sense another reunion coming on.

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***Beverley Smith (5643)***  
***offers some practical insights***  
***into making a success***  
***of a large family gathering***

**I learned a great deal from attending a Randall family gathering at Sutton Hall in Stockcross, Berkshire on 23 May 2009. The event was by invitation only, and it was confined to descendants of Robert Randall and Elizabeth (née) Bates, who married at Kintbury on 23 September 1833 and produced eight children:**

**the first-born, Georgiana, died unmarried in 1855**

**the second, Daniel, was probably baptised in 1836 (no marriage or death found)**

**Sophia, the third child (and from whom I descend), went to New Zealand**

**the fourth, Elizabeth, stayed in Berkshire**

**the fifth, Caroline, went to New Zealand**

**William, the sixth child, stayed in Berkshire**

**John, the seventh child, stayed in England**

**and Rosanna, the eighth, went to New Zealand.**

## The gathering of clans

There were 115 present at the gathering but, because three of the children of Robert and Elizabeth settled in New Zealand, there was an imbalance of numbers; more than 100 of those present were from William's line, and fewer than 10 were descendants of the others. (One of the visitors was a cousin from New Zealand here on holiday, whom I had never met, which was strange as I was born in New Zealand.) It was a very enjoyable day, from which I learned a great deal.

Name tags were handed out, but I think colour-coding relating to ancestry would also have been helpful.

One very important detail is to have someone to act as a welcoming coordinator prepared to get people into relative family groups.

A very large tree was laid out, along with a screen showing old photos. Those leaving for the other side of the world were (in the early years) unlikely ever to get back, so they took many photos with them, and also had photos sent to them. Being very precious, these have survived in our family's case. This reminded me of the importance (to all of us) of naming all our photos. Older family members often can't remember, or perhaps never even knew. We have also some very old letters and an old

diary with a wealth of detail, but sadly the writer didn't tell us much of what we would really like to know, because of course he knew to whom and to what he was referring.

Ask to take copies of papers and photos brought to the gathering, and get them named as far as possible. Laptops and copiers are a great help in that. I personally brought extra copies (as did others) to hand out on request.

Take photos of all gathered.

Ask about family stories. I've found that most have some truth in them. It's quite strange to find that some branches of my family had versions of a story that others had not heard, perhaps because our family was so spread out.

Family likenesses are worth noting. I saw at this gathering a young man who is the spitting image of my second son. It was very strange to say the least.

Don't forget to ask overseas descendants to contribute, and acknowledge what is sent. I made up a large folder of all the very well prepared trees, stories, and photos sent from cousins in New Zealand and Australia. These (along with my direct line, which I colour-coded and numbered) then formed the index in the front of the folder. As I had many old photos and more recent ones of those who went to New Zealand together with their descendants, I found it easier to do a section on each in an acid-free folder and pockets, with a clearly numbered index corresponding to the folder holding the trees and stories. (I do recommend acid-free for storing photos and documents.)

I've asked all my living relatives to put down on paper as much as they are willing to of their lives and memories of family members who have since died.



The second edition of the Members' Handbook was published late in 2009. Copies are routinely sent to all new members on joining, but long-standing existing members who would like to update theirs may order a copy of the second edition from the membership secretary (address inside front cover). Please enclose a cheque for £2.30 (UK), £3.00 (Europe) and £3.70 (RoW).

**Peter O'Kill (4335)** has produced an eight-page A5 booklet to mark the centenary of Sunningdale village hall, detailing the hall's origins and development. He is happy to send a complimentary copy (electronic or paper) to anyone who would like one.

### Records wanted

*If you have records of any names that would fit into the Berkshire Miscellaneous Index (relating to an event occurring within pre- and post-1974 Berkshire), please send them by post to the address on page 34 or by email to <miscindex@berksfhs.org.uk>.*

***John Starr (6358)  
unearthed some grave facts  
about the burials of his  
great-grandparents  
John and Emily Starr***

John and Emily were both born in the mid-1840s near Linton, Cambridgeshire, of agricultural labourer stock. Probably they left for London together as teenagers, for in the 1861 census I found John in London as a brewer's apprentice and Emily (née French) in service. In 1866 they married, perhaps surprisingly, not back in Linton but in St Peter's, Pimlico (now Eaton Square), he 21 and she a minor (actually 20). Parents were not witnesses. However, the couple were back in Linton less than a year later for the birth of a daughter, Mary Ann Maria, who sadly died from "diarrhoea and exhaustion" back in London, when just one year old.

Subsequently, John and Emily were to have nine more children (including my grandfather,



# How common!



Fred) of whom the last, Lucy, died when just three years old in 1894. Shortly after the death of Mary Ann Maria they moved into Flat 21, Castle Buildings, Castle Lane, Westminster (off Buckingham Gate, near Buckingham Palace and Westminster Cathedral). Castle Buildings were owned by the Stag Brewery, for whom John was working. Later Stag was taken over by Watneys, which in the twentieth century became Watney Combe Reid.

Castle Lane and buildings, including my father's school (formerly Buckingham Gate Central School), are still there, like an oasis amid the rushing traffic and building works, As the family grew, John and Emily moved to no. 35, then no. 56 Castle Buildings, and it was here that Emily died in 1912 and John, a



retired drayman, in 1914. (Grandfather Starr retired from Watneys in 1937, ending some 60 years' association with Castle Buildings.)

The RD stated on Emily's and John's death certificates was St George's, Hanover Square. So where were they buried?

Westminster Archives listed a number of cemeteries which, in the mid-nineteenth century, were bought as burial grounds for the London populace. Helpful replies from a number of cemetery supervisors eventually led to Hanwell, Ealing. A burial map was enclosed, with John's and Emily's graves marked in Area 20A, as graves 146 and 114. My surprise, then, was to find that the Starrs were buried in common, unmarked graves!

Common graves were *those belonging to the owners of the cemetery, in which no private burial rights exist. Common graves were filled over the course of a few days with bodies of unrelated people who could afford nothing better. No headstones were erected.*

What is the relation to a pauper's grave?



*A pauper was a penniless person buried by the Board of Guardians (ie, at public expense). Any common grave would probably have some paupers. There is thus no such thing as a pauper's grave, and the term is never used officially.*

Common graves were dug some 25 feet deep and contained some eight burials. Hanwell has 100,000 burials, of which 16,000 are marked.

Now John was a drayman, which I imagine to be a fairly middle-class position; they appear well turned out in the photograph, so why did he consign his wife to a common grave in 1912? Similarly, John's seven surviving children were in service, or had husbands in employment (in 1914 my grandfather was employed by Watneys at £100 per annum) so why was their father consigned to a common grave in 1914?

The Hanwell site is very well maintained and, by lining up north-south-east-west with marked graves, I was able roughly to locate John's and Emily's graves. They were in different rows and some 10 metres apart. Her burial was 114, his 146, so, taking eight burials per grave, that makes 32 x 8, or over 250 burials in Plot 20A in the two years between their deaths.

I have subsequently found that little Lucy, buried in 1894, lies on the other side of the graveyard. Son William who died in 1905, aged 30, is in Plot 19, quite close to his parents. As I stood at the gravesides I was left wondering: why did John and then his children insist on a burial in a common grave? Was it financial, or perhaps Hanwell was too far out for visiting? Perhaps, then, I was the first visitor in nearly 100 years?

*Note: Hanwell Cemetery has many graves of those killed by enemy action in Westminster during the last war. There is also a long, formal Wall of Remembrance erected by Westminster City Council listing all those killed.*

*John Starr marks his great-grandfather's common grave. Emily's grave is in the foreground.*





**Barry Boulton  
(3236) has  
unravelling a  
remarkable family  
story, beginning  
with a child's grave  
in the church of St  
Mary, in Shinfield**

## **From Loch Awe to Shinfield The Mackellar dynasty**

Earlier this year a bequest from my late aunt Joan Wood to Shinfield St Mary's parish church, where our family has 300-year-old links, allowed the font to be re-sited. This required the removal of a few pews and the lifting of some floor tiles originally laid in 1855. During these alterations the tomb of Dr George Mitford (father of Mary, the author of *Our Village*) was uncovered. A brass plate was revealed, and its original position on his tomb cover could be seen; it has now been re-instated. Several children's graves were also discovered. Two were established as the children of Colonel Wilder, who lived in Shinfield, and who later moved to Binfield Manor House. Another contained a coffin plate to a Flora Mackellar.

### ***Who was she, and how did she gain the privilege of a burial in a brick-lined tomb within the church?***

In the parish registers I found that a John and Mary Mackellar had baptised four children at Shinfield. The investigation that followed has led me to the fascinating story of the Mackellar family.

John Mackellar (1766 – 1854) was born at Mahon on the island of Minorca on 13 January 1766, and his brother Neil on 16 January 1772. Their father, Patrick Mackellar, was an army engineer who constructed the island defences. His will of 1776 stated that John and Neil were *begotten by me upon the body of Mrs Elizabeth Lezain, widow*, and he left £6,000 to these two sons, who were sent from Edinburgh to be educated at Kilmichael in Glasrie. If either were to die, their half of the inheritance was to go to their uncle Neil Mackellar of Dail on Loch Etive.

John Mackellar entered the Navy on 6 January 1781. He was wounded in the same year during an action against the French, when he was serving on the *Rodney*. He moved to the *Enterprise* in 1782, where he saw active service in the West Indies. He served on many ships, including *HMS Victory*.

In March 1801 John Mackellar was on *HMS Terpsichore*, where he had been acting captain since October 1797. One of his first assignments was breaking the blockade of Boulogne and Calais with the fleet under Admiral Nelson. He had gone ashore with a party of men and blown up lock gates, but was

captured. In June of that year his ship was ordered to the East Indies.

*Terpsichore* was under repair in Bombay during December 1801 when news was received that the Portuguese settlements along the coast were being threatened by a French squadron. Captain Mackellar took *HMS Cornwallis* and, with a number of East India Company vessels, went to reinforce them. Four months later his own ship, having been repaired, sailed on 27 March 1802, collecting more troops under Sir William Clarke, who had been blockading Goa. Seven days later they landed 3,000 men at Surat to rescue the governor who was besieged there.

On 26 May 1802 it appears that Captain Mackellar was dismissed from the service by court martial because of *scandalous, cruel and oppressive conduct*. However, because of his service to the East India Company in 1801-02 and the gratitude of the Bombay government, he was reinstated. In 1804 he was appointed agent for prisoners of war and governor of the naval hospital at Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he remained for about six years.

In 1815 he was given command of *HMS Romney*, and in 1818 he arrived in Portsmouth from Jamaica and Havana aboard the *Pique*, a captured French ship previously called *Pallas*. The *Pique* was reportedly carrying a quantity of specie (coins) to the value of half a million sterling.

At some time before 1815 presumably he married Mary (?) of Cockington, Devon (born around 1796) who was about 25 years his junior, because their first child, Elizabeth Margaret Mary



Anne Mackellar, was born 24 May 1815 and baptised 4 August 1815 at Old Church, St Pancras, in London. (On 24 October 1833, whilst the family were living in Boulogne, she married Edwin Wyatt, a solicitor from Denbighshire.)

Their second child, Jessie Victoria Mackellar, was born in December 1819 and baptised on 10 February 1820, also at St Pancras Old Church. (Jessie married

George Osbourne Townshend in 1839.)

The Mackellars moved to Highlands, an estate west of the Basingstoke Road, opposite Hyde End Road, Spencers Wood, then in the parish of Shinfield, before their third child was born. Lillie Augusta Drummond Mackellar was baptised in Shinfield on the 26 April 1821 as the *daughter of Captain Mackellar RN*. (She married Colonel Thomas John White in 1843 at Ile-de-France, Paris.)

The fourth child, John Patrick Neil Drummond Mackellar, was born on 23 October 1822 and baptised in Shinfield on 22 May 1823. He was entered in the registers as son of Captain John Mackellar of *the Highland Regt*, which should have read Highlands. (At his father's death in 1854 he was a 3rd Lt of the Madras Infantry in India and was bequeathed a picture of his grandfather painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, a picture of his father and mother, a picture of his late uncle, Colonel

Mackellar CB, a gold watch and a ring once the property of Lord Nelson presented to his father by Sir Thomas Hardy. *The Times* of Monday 26 December 1864 reported that *on the 5th Oct. last, lost in the 'Persia' between Rangoon and Calcutta, Major John Patrick Neil*



*Donald Mackellar of the Madras Army and the Commissariat, Tonghoo, Burmah, eldest son of the late Admiral John Mackellar, grandson of the late General Patrick Mackellar RE and nephew of the late Colonel Neil Mackellar of the 'Royals' CB.)*

The fifth child, Flora Irene Campbell Mackellar, was baptised 11 August 1825 in Shinfield as the daughter of Admiral Mackellar, and she died the same year. Her little grave started this research.

The sixth child, Neilena Marion Mackellar, was baptised on the 24 May 1827 in Shinfield. (She married Surgeon Major Alexander Charles Macleod in September 1848 at Wrexham, before sailing to India where she died within a year of arriving at Jubalopore, Madras.)

The seventh child was Isabella Julia Matilda Mackellar, who was baptised at the British Chapel 31 July 1831 in Boulogne-Sur-Mer, Pas de Calais. (She married John Feilde Jackson in the March quarter of 1855 in London.)

The eighth and last child, Pierie Cochrane Duncan Mackellar, was born 10 July 1836 and baptised 13 February 1838, also at the British Chapel in Boulogne.

Admiral John Mackellar appears on the 1851 census of Woodford, Essex, as an admiral on half pay of £150, aged 80, born Minorca, with his wife Mary aged 55, born in Devon, and their daughter Lillie with her husband and family. He died and was buried at the church of St Philip and St James, Leckhampton, Cheltenham on 14 April 1854. He left a PCC will dated 10 February 1854 with a codicil, which was proved 1 June 1854.

*The Gentleman's Magazine* of July 1854 carried an obituary: *left issue 3 sons and 4 daughters – his eldest son John P N D Mackellar is in the service of the East India Company in which he is a distinguished linguist.*

His wife, Mary Mackellar, died aged 71 in the March quarter of 1866 in Kensington.

Neil Mackellar CB, the younger brother of John, joined the 1st or Royal Scots Regiment of

Foot as an ensign in 1789, rose to colonel in 1819, and was awarded a CB for his military service. He died at the Junior United Service Club. In his PCC will dated 23 Oct 1837, he left money to his nieces Lillie and Neilena and his brother John. A witness to the will was a Duncan Mackellar, probably the son of his cousin Neil who left a PCC will at Boulogne in 1841. His CB stall plate was recently sold.

Colonel Patrick Mackellar, the father of John and Neil, was born in 1717 at Lochaweside in Scotland, and died 22 October 1778 on Minorca. A military engineer, he was part of Colonel Wolfe's army in Canada, and drew maps for the storming of the Heights of Abraham. The DNB has an extensive report about his military life in America, Canada and Minorca.

The Mackellars were a sept of the Campbells who spread from Lochaweside to Glen Shira. Patrick was the son of a previous John Mackellar, the last to be tenant of Maam. A Duncan MacIntyre 1652-83 wrote an elegy *tumha teaglaich a mhain* mourning the family of Mackellar who held the farms of Maam and Kilblaan and land at Stucksgarden in Glen Shira.

Who would have thought a small grave marker could result in such a story!

Sources:

PCC wills of John, Patrick and Neil Mackellar

Shinfield St Mary's parish registers

Notes on the court martial of Admiral Mackellar

*The Times*, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Military Gentleman*

*DNB* for England and Canada

With thanks to Charles Bazalgette whose ancestor was a sailor on board the *Terpsichore*

***This article has of necessity been abridged for publication here, but anyone who would like access to the longer version is welcome to contact Barry Boulton.***

***The East India Company (EIC) was founded by royal charter on 31 December 1600. It was granted monopolistic privileges on trade with the Far East, and swiftly surpassed Dutch and Portuguese competition. The company grew in power, wealth and influence, both at home and abroad, and became a nation unto itself, ruling large territories with its own military and administrative apparatus.***

Known colloquially as John Company, the EIC controlled three broadly distinct armies, one for each of the three “presidencies” into which their Indian territories were divided: Bombay, Bengal and Madras. A number of men were selected to garrison the company’s territory in the Atlantic Ocean: the island of St. Helena. In the early days these armies were officered by Europeans, but largely employed locally recruited Indo-Portuguese “Topaz” as their soldiers. Then, following some humiliation by the French in the mid-eighteenth century, the decision was made to recruit British and Swiss mercenaries.

The appeal of life in the armies of India was high. First, the company could offer the stability of a regular income and, in later years, an attractive pension. Second, as its power and influence expanded, the company was able to promote soldiers to positions of administrative responsibility with a salary and status not easily achievable at home.

Lists of soldiers who embarked in the company’s ships for India are available at the

## Gone for a soldier



***Peter Bailey,  
chairman of the  
Families in British  
India Society***



Oriental and India Office records at the British Library (Series L/MIL/9/-). They start in 1741 and continue up to and beyond the demise of the EIC following the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Soldiers from all over the British Isles were sent to India at the rate of 2,000 to 3,000 per year. In the early days, ships carried 30 to 40 men at a time on the six or seven month voyage. This rapidly increased to 100 or 200, and the voyage decreased to three months.

The Families in British India Society (FIBIS) advises and assists in the research of ancestors who served in all capacities in British India. It is in the process of entering details of army recruits into a database, and so far has included close to 5,000 from between 1741 and 1754. These, together with data on over 500,000

others who served in British India, may be viewed free of charge in its searchable website at <[www.fibis.org](http://www.fibis.org)>.

There are just over 30 from Berkshire, shown opposite, with a good indication that some of these may have agreed to go together.

The contracted length of service in the early days was as little as five years. Later however, following the promise of increased pension, most soldiers opted for “unlimited” service of 18 years with an option to serve three additional years. Of course, the enemy, the climate, mosquitoes and bacteria in India greatly limited one’s chance of return. Furthermore, the attractive life for those promoted to administrative positions caused many to stay on. However, many did return to their native land, some bringing a wife or finding one on their return, to found local families.

## East India Company army embarkation returns in the mid-eighteenth century – Berkshire names

surname	forename	parish	former occupation	age	ship	sailed	army
Gardner	Wm		Labourer	26	Montfort	04/02/1742	Madras
Nation	John		Labourer	17	Exeter	04/02/1742	Madras
Orput	Charles		Labourer	19	York	11/01/1743	Madras
Willis	John	Bradfield	Labourer	17	Grantham	1753	Bencoolen
Morris	John	Reading	Taylor	24	George	1753	Madras
Habbard	(?)	Windsor	Painter	22	Essex	1753	Madras
Waters	Edward	Abington	Labourer	18	Onslow	1753	Madras
Edmonds	William	Uppington	Labourer	19	Triton	1753	Madras
Brown	Edward		Labourer	37	Houghton	1754	Bombay
Stowers	Thomas	Farnborough	Labourer	18	Onslow	1756	St. Helena
Palmer	Nath'l	Hungerford	Labourer	36	Triton	1753	Madras
Williams	Henry	Reading	Labourer	17	Denham	1753	Bengal
Millis	John	Windsor	Soldier	32	Warren	1753	Madras
Samples	Sawyer	Reading	Baker	22	Hardwicke	1753	Bombay
Smith	Chas.	Newberry	Labourer	21	Hardwicke	1753	Bombay
Elliot Hood	Thomas	Windsor	Butcher	18	P* Henry	1753	Bombay
Humphreys	Stephen		Labourer	33	Exeter	1754	Bencoolen
Walker	Robert	Windsor	Labourer	25	Exeter	1754	Bencoolen
Biddard	Timothy	Reading	Labourer	16	P* George	1754	Madras
Nash	George		Shoe maker	24	P* George	1754	Madras
Smart	Richard	Windsor	Labourer	19	P* George	1754	Madras
Cutter	Benjamin	Cookham	Gardner	35	P* of Wales	1754	Madras
Norcott	John	Reading	Gunsmith	26	P* of Wales	1754	Madras
Napp	William	Reading	Labourer	19	Bombay C*	1754	Madras
Plastow	Rob't	Newbury	Weaver	18	Bombay C*	1754	Madras
Pearse	Joseph	Newbury	Wool comber	19	Bombay C*	1754	Madras
Allen	William	Reading	Labourer	21	Rhoda	1754	Madras
Richardson	John	Ashberry	Baker	21	Rhoda	1754	Madras
Beaver	Samuel	Oakenham	Labourer	21	Hardwick	1754	Madras
Drewitt	Christ'r	Reading	Soldier	29	Hardwick	1754	Madras
Hester	John		Gardner	26	Hardwick	1754	Madras
Jones	Joseph	Reading	Labourer	26	Hardwick	1754	Madras
Hobbs	James	Sutton	Carpenter	26	Eastcourt	1754	Bengal
Burton	John		Sawyer	40	D* of Dorset	1754	Bengal
Hill	Thomas	Newberrey	Soldier	32	D* of Dorset	1754	Bengal

\* abbreviations: P = Prince    C = Castle    D = Duke



# THE HOMECOMING

**This heart-felt essay by Valerie Storie (1953) was submitted by Berkshire WI to the National Federation as a competition entry, and was justly praised for its emotive power, all the more intense because she was unable to make the journey in person, as she explains opposite.**

*A lone piper is playing as I cross the border on the final stage of the search for my roots. There is no time to stand and stare at the wonderful panorama all around me; I'm driven by the need to reach my journey's end. Not far now.*

*Leaving the main road behind me, the way ahead is surprisingly straight, with craggy hills on either side covered in a pale green mantle - a sign of past summer rain. To the right the hills rise steeply, lit by a watery sun. Below me, to the left through the hedgerows, a glimpse every now and then of the gently flowing Bowmont Water; no hint yet of the turbulent torrent that will result from the winter storms. Beyond the water, shadows dance across the landscape as small clouds play hide-and-seek with the sun.*

*Clusters of seemingly white dots are proof that this is sheep-farming country, but the peace is broken only by the wind and the birdsong. As the road narrows it starts to twist and turn; in the far distance there is an occasional glimpse of The Cheviot standing like a sentinel, as if watching for the border raiders of old. On the right I pass strange indentations in the hillside, perhaps evidence of an earlier settlement. It can't be long before the first sighting of the farmstead that was the family home over a century and a half ago.*

*The winding road begins to drop down towards the water's edge. A handful of sheep wander from left to right so I call out, "Mint sauce, mint sauce," and they scatter in confusion. A graduated black and white post on the verge indicates the level to which flood waters have risen in the past; difficult to imagine on such a calm September day. Eventually the road will come to an end, and the only sign of the old drover's road then will be a barely discernible track continuing over the horizon on its way to England.*

*My heart pounds, for suddenly I see it in the distance nestling in the folds of the hills. The stone farmhouse looks deceptively small, dwarfed by its surroundings. A few more bends, and I turn left over a narrow bridge. Between several rusting pieces of old farm machinery a group of strong-faced Cheviot sheep interrupt their grazing to look up in mild interest as I pass. I know there are the sounds of a working farm all around me, but I hear nothing. Time stands still. In this place my family once lived, loved, worked and died. Unseen, yet I can feel them all around me. As I approach the house they open their arms to me in welcome. I am home.*



## The background

I'm fiercely proud of my Scottish ancestry, and it was always my dearest wish to go to the area in the Borders (Jedburgh/Kelso/Cheviot Hills) where my family originated. However fate took a hand and I was denied the chance, so when a cousin, Peter Budgen, offered to spend a holiday there in 1988 with a video camera, visiting all the farmsteads and locations that I had uncovered in my research, I jumped at his offer.

The two-hour film began with the crossing of the border and the journey down to Mowhaugh, alongside Bowmont Water, virtually within sight of The Cheviot. All the family were farmworkers – stewards, shepherds and foresters – so they are difficult to track down, being in different locations at each census; they tended to move from one stately pile to another. William Storie 1803-78 (my great-great-grandfather) was at the steward's house at Mowhaugh, owned by the

Duke of Roxburghe, by 1871, and he died there in 1878 of cholera. His son Andrew was described as farm steward; his father had presumably all but retired from that position. Andrew's brother, my great-grandfather William, was by now preparing to come south with his five children, and by 1888 he was working for the Earl of Carnarvon at Highclere.

A distant cousin had more latterly been a housekeeper at Mowhaugh, and Peter Budgen was generously given a large box containing some really old pictures (all now identified). Annie Storie (1889 - 1970) was identified as mine by being described as very independent and with a temper. There couldn't be too many Stories like that, and her family had all lived at the next farmstead several miles further south, just as the road became a track disappearing over the border. Certificates later proved she was indeed a second cousin, once removed.

**Valerie Storie**



*Mowhaugh School about 1897 (possibly earlier)  
Annie's sister (Mary Storie, born 1885) is the tall girl standing in the middle front.  
Annie, born 1889, is immediately behind her in a dark dress, brother James Storie (born 1887) is the boy on the left side of the photo, peeping out between two other lads. Given Mary's apparent age – she looks to be older than the others – she may have been a pupil teacher.*



*Children watching the sheep-washing at Mowhaugh (not dipping as we know it). It always took place in the same pool on a bend of the gently flowing Bowmont Water, and was quite a social occasion. (Photo made into a postcard and dated September 1907. Part of Annie's collection.)*

## Bookends

*Prices quoted are for:*

*a) direct sales from the bookshop at the Research Centre*

*b) mail order purchase within UK, including p&p by second class post unless stated otherwise*

*c) mail order purchase from overseas, including p&p airmail*

*POA indicates price on application to BerksFHS Books*

**Jean Debney**

### BERKSHIRE FHS PUBLICATION

#### ***Berkshire Burial Index 8th edition***

CD BRK 0251, (BerksFHS, 2009)

Bookshop £16.00, mail order £16.80 UK, £18.45 overseas

Wow! This latest edition contains a whopping 670,000 burials in pre-1974 Berkshire, an increase of over 65,000 since last year's seventh edition.

Entries have been taken mainly from Anglican burial registers, but there are some nonconformist and non-Christian burials, as well as some from municipal cemeteries. Entries are indexed by name, place and date, and place and name. In order to get the full information you are advised to check entries in both the latter two. As always, it is important to check the original document for any additional information outside the remit of the index.

The project, first published in 2002, is organised by David Wright with a team of

about 20 volunteers working at home and in the Berkshire Record Office.

This is a veritable goldmine of Berkshire data that you cannot afford to be without. Updates are available for earlier editions (see the website for details).

### BERKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

#### ***Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire county maps***

(Archive CD Books, Maps Series)

ISBN 1 84594 474 7

Bookshop £11.50, mail order £12.30 UK, £13.95 overseas

This is a useful desktop way of viewing old county maps, which are normally only accessible in county libraries. The Berkshire maps are dated 1695, 1806, 1839, 1847, 1869 and 1903, and they provide an opportunity to see how your area of interest has changed over the centuries.

***Lyson's Magna Britannia: Berkshire (1806)***

(Archive CD Books, History and Topography Series, GB0434-2, 2002)

ISBN 1 84551 153 0

Bookshop £13.00, mail order £13.80 UK, £15.45 overseas

Although this has been available for some time in our bookshop it has never been reviewed, but it is such a useful source of local history at the start of the nineteenth century, I thought it was about time I brought it to your attention.

The contents, viewed in Adobe Acrobat Reader and fully searchable, include an alphabetical list of *Parochial topography* (parish histories) as well as many other interesting sections. I was particularly interested in the plan of Reading in 1806, which illustrates the development at that time.

***Berkshire marriages: Phillimore's parish registers, vols 1 and 2***

(Archive CD Books, Parish Register Series, 1908 and 1914)

ISBN 1 84594 192 6

Bookshop £11.50, mail order £12.30 UK £13.95 overseas

Only 150 copies of this valuable resource were published. Many marriage registers were not available in the early nineteenth century, but those that were are included in these two volumes. Vol 1 contains Wantage (1538 - 1837) and West Woodhay (1653 - 1812), and vol 2 contains Harwell (1559 - 1837), Bradfield (1559 - 1812), Sparsholt (1559 - 1812), West Hendred (1558 - 1837), Sulham (1723 - 1837), Kingston Lisle (1560 - 1837), Purley (1662 - 1837), Buscot (1676) and West Hanney (1564 - 1837). It is very important with these early transcripts to check entries against the original registers, which will also include names of witnesses to marriages from 1753.

***East Ilsley war memorial: names familiar to all***

Kay Sanderson (Sigma Books, 2009)

A4, transparent plastic cover, 30pp; index

ISBN 978 1 90 5291 24 3

Bookshop £4.00, mail order POA

This is a nicely presented publication which includes biographical and local details, some with portraits, plus cemeteries and other historical images in black and white and colour. The entries are in order of death (1914-44) and the index at the back is in the same order.

***Marcham remembered: a village in pictures: from old Berkshire to new Oxfordshire***

(The Marcham Society, 2009)

A4 flexiback, 105pp; index of people and places

ISBN 978 0 9530220 2 1

This is an interesting and informative book about a Berkshire downland village near Abingdon. It is divided into chapters on *The land, Buildings, Work, Schools, Transport, Sport and leisure, Occasions and people* and, finally, *The changing village*.

Each chapter is compiled by members of the Marcham Society, and consists of the main text, relative historical notes in a text box and, of course, numerous captioned photographs as well as other items of interest. Inside the front cover is a section from the 1830 OS one-inch map of the parish, and a sketch map of the modern parish inside the back cover.

Altogether it is an excellent publication.

***Foul deeds and suspicious deaths in Reading***

John J Eddleston (Wharncliffe Books, 2009)

A5 flexiback, 160pp; index

ISBN 1 845631 13 7

Bookshop £12.99, mail order £14.85 UK, £18.10 overseas

The theme of this gruesome but sensational book is mainly women driven to distraction by love and unwanted pregnancies. Illustrated with original police photographs, hand-written confessions and archive maps, the cases include Amelia Dyer, the Reading baby-farmer, who drowned seven babies in the Thames, Minnie Freeman Lee found dead in a trunk, and even crimes involving an Elvis Presley fan club and religious sacrifice.

According to the publisher's press release this book "will be fascinating reading for anyone interested in the sinister side of human nature."

***Redlands: a hundred years at school, 1891 - 1991***

Patrick Rooke (Redlands School Parent Teacher Association, 1991)  
A4 flexiback, 48pp  
POA

Redlands was a Board School built to serve the growing community of children in this area just south of central Reading and close to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. At first it consisted of three elementary schools for boys, girls and infants. In the late twentieth century it was altered to a primary and a secondary modern school. In the First World War it became No. 4 Reading War Hospital, with beds for 120 wounded servicemen; the pupils and teachers were transferred to surrounding schools.

The main sources used were the architect's drawings, sections of which are used to illustrate the pages, and the school logbooks. Written nearly 20 years ago, it concentrates on the school's history in relation to local and national events, and has few details of pupils or teachers. However, it is very well written, and is a mine of information for educational historians.

***Ralph Newbery and the Bell Inn***

Margaret Railton (2008)  
A5 flexiback, 28pp  
Bookshop £3.00, mail order £3.80 UK,  
£4.95 overseas

This is a well researched and well written history by an experienced author of a 600-year-old building: formerly Beenhams manor house and now the Bell Inn in Waltham St Lawrence. It was purchased in 1592/3 by Ralph Newbery (c1535 - 1603), citizen and stationer of London and Waltham St Lawrence, who bequeathed it for the use of the poor of the parish for ever. Illustrated with photographs and plans of the house over time, this publication is recommended for your bookshelf.

**FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH AIDS**

***Military photographs and how to date them***

Neil Storey (Countryside Books, 2009)  
B5 flexiback, 192pp  
ISBN 978 1 84674 152 4  
Bookshop £12.99, mail order £14.55 UK,  
£19.75 overseas

At last, a reference book to help all those family historians desperately trying to discover the information from family military photos. Over 230 photographs illustrate the different sections: *Soldiers of the Queen, The Edwardian era, First World War, The inter-war years* and *Second World War*. There are also two appendices: *British Infantry Regiments in 1865* and *The Home Guard in the Second World War*. Each section starts with an informative introduction followed by the photographs, which have useful captions. The author, a professional historian who also contributes to *Family Tree* and *Practical Family History* magazines, writes knowledgeably about this fascinating subject. A copy will definitely be on my bookshelf.

# Write now

*Your letters,  
your queries,  
your news*

## Charles Booth

From Monica Neville (6453)

The article in the last magazine on Charles Booth was especially interesting, as I have used his notebooks and maps extensively for research.

As well as working online with the maps, it is possible to buy the whole set for home use. The four maps in full colour plus some introductory information come in a large tube and costs £20 from the Museum of London's online shop.

*Please send your letters and articles to the editor, either by email to <editor@berksfhs.org.uk> or by post to The Editor, Berkshire Family Historian, The Holding, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, Berks RG20 0HW. 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.*

## Benjamin Lay

From **Dorothea Wartnaby** (6872)

Is there any way of finding out if Quaker Benjamin Lay (1681 - 1760), born in Colchester, died in Pennsylvania (he was an opponent of slavery) was a relative of my GGG Benjamin Lay (c1755) of Didcot, Berks? He had a son Benjamin (1781 - 1861) who married Sarah Bullock.

I would also be grateful if anyone has a photo of the Lay family that I could have a copy of. My grandfather was Richard Lay, who was married to Isabella Tigwell. They lived in the Sulhampstead area.

## HMS Martin

From **Tom Meaden**

I am researching the World War II Destroyer *HMS Martin* which was torpedoed and sunk with a crew of 222 on the 10 November 1942, with the loss of 159, one of whom was my 18-year-old uncle Ordinary Seaman Thomas Cusack. After two years of research and contact with six of the survivors and some relatives of those who were lost, we decided to develop a website dedicated to those who served in *HMS Martin*. I am therefore contacting every family history society in the counties where the men who were lost hailed from, so hopefully relatives of those men can contact us and forward information if they so wish. One of the crew was from Berkshire: Able Seaman William Alfred Goodbody, son of James and Julia Goodbody; husband of Winifred B Goodbody, of Faringdon, Berkshire.



# Members' interests

*Compiled by Bob Plumridge*

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6954	AILES	Clapham	SRY	All
6935	ALLEN	St Ewe	CON	pre 1850
6935	ASHMAN	Kilmersdon	SOM	pre 1800
6935	BALLARD	Kingston Bagpuize	BRK	pre 1800
6935	BARRETT	Oxford	OXF	pre 1800
6929	BECK	Leicester	LEI	1855-2009
6929	BECK	Loughborough	LEI	pre 1861
6776	BEDDING	All	LND	1800 on
6936	BERKELEY	Oundle	NTH	1700-1800
6936	BERKELEY	Kingscliffe	NTH	1800-1870
6776	BLACKWOOD	All	NIRL	1800 on
6931	CANNING	Winterbourne	BRK	1700-1900
6931	CANNON	Winterbourne	BRK	1700-1900
6929	CHARLESTON	Ashton in Makerfield	LAN	pre 1851
6936	CHISMAN	St Pancras	LND	1827-1900
6936	CHISMAN	Sunderland	DUR	1794-1826
6929	COOK	Quorndon	LEI	pre 1841
6935	EATWELL	All	BRK	pre 1820
6936	ETHERIDGE	Bishop Cleeve	GLS	1700-1850
6936	ETHERIDGE	Ramsgate	KEN	1850-1900
6929	FARRELLY	Castletown-Kilpatrick	MEA	pre 1901
6776	GODDEN	All	KEN	1800 on
6935	GREEN	Holcombe	SOM	pre 1800
6954	GRUBB	Newbury	BRK	All
6776	HALES	All	LND	1800 on
6936	HARRIS	Pennington	HAM	1714-1854

6776	HAWKINS	All	SFK	All
6929	HINDLEY	Culcheth (Twissgreen)	LAN	All
6899	HOLLAND	Reading	BRK	1810-1840
6954	HUBBARD	Lambeth	SRY	All
6899	HUGHES	Catmore	BRK	1820-1880
6899	HUGHES	Wickham	BRK	1770-1820
6935	HUM(M)	Lavenham	SFK	pre 1700
6936	KEAL	Marylebone	LND	1700-1900
6954	KEEFE	Clapham	SRY	All
5545	LANAWAY	Reading	BRK	1850-1880
6921	LAWRENCE	Newbury	BRK	1789-1820
6921	LAWRENCE	Streatley	BRK	1834-1911
6872	LAY	White Hill Farm Sulhampstead	BRK	1781-1881
6929	LEESON	Tilton on the Hill	LEI	pre 1841
6776	LITTLEJOHN	All	SCT	1800 on
6929	LOVE	Sproxtton	LEI	pre 1811
6929	MARKEY	Castletown-Kilpatrick	MEA	All
6929	McNAMEE	Clonmellon	WEM	pre 1885
6892	MERVIN	All	DEV	1800-1911
6892	MILLS	All	DEV	1800-1911
6929	NEWTON	Leicester	LEI	1861-2009
6929	NEWTON	Somerby	LEI	All
6935	PADFIELD	Kilmersdon	SOM	pre 1800
6776	PANKHURST	All	KEN	1800 on
6954	PARSONS	Newbury	BRK	All
6954	PARSONS	West Ham	ESS	All
6899	PEARCE	Wallingford	BRK	1820-1880
6899	PEARCE	Cholsey	BRK	1850-1930
6954	PERCIVAL	Greenwich	KEN	pre 1900
6954	PERCIVAL	Plaistow	ESS	pre 1900
6935	PLOWMAN	Bury St Edmunds	SFK	pre 1810
6931	POVEY	Winterbourne	BRK	1700-1900
6935	PRICE	St Austell	CON	pre 1850
6935	ROBERTS	Norton Lyndsey	WAR	pre 1850
6892	RUNDLE	All	DEV	1800-1911
6776	SHAW	All	DEV	pre 1800
6776	SIGGENS	All	LND	All
6892	SMITH	All	HAM	1800-1911
6929	SMYTH	Castletown-Kilpatrick	MEA	1860-2008
6776	STANBRIDGE	All	All	All
6892	STRATH	All	HAM	1800-1911
6935	SYKES	Huddersfield	YKS	pre 1850
6929	TEBBS	Somerby	LEI	pre 1861
6872	TIGWELL	Ufton	BRK	pre 1800
6921	TOWNSEND	Streatley	BRK	1831-1870
6921	TOWNSEND	Chilton	BRK	1783-1831
6954	TURNER	Lambeth	SRY	All
6929	VALENTINE	Tyldesley	LAN	pre 1891
6929	WATTS	Quorndon	LEI	pre 1855
6892	WHITE	All	HAM	1800-1911
6776	WILKIE	All	SCT	1800 on
6892	WIMTTY	All	HAM	1800-1911
6776	WYETH	All	LND	All



# Research Centre *services*

## **Berks FHS Research Centre**

**Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berks RG1 7TJ**

**0118 950 9553**

The Research Centre is 15 minutes' walk from the centre of Reading, next door to the Berkshire Record Office and in the same building as the Reading Register Office. Follow the signs to the Berkshire Record Office. There is ample free parking.

The Research Centre comprises two floors, with books, films and microfiche on the first floor in the library, and the administration, bookshop, 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, 19.00 - 21.30**

### **Wednesdays and Thursdays**

**10.00 - 16.00**

### **2nd and 4th Sundays each month**

**11.00 - 16.00**

**(excluding bank holiday weekends)**

All staff on duty are volunteers who help researchers in the centre, but they do not carry out research for visitors.

Find My Past and Ancestry Library Edition can be accessed in the computer suite for a charge of £1 per hour each. Find My Past offers census records for England and Wales (1841 to 1901), GRO indexes, millions of English and Welsh parish records (from indexes or transcriptions), outward passenger lists (1890 - 1960), and military records. The centre's version of Ancestry provides datasets from North America and Europe, as well as much UK material, including an increasing number of Greater London parish

records (not Westminster). Note that neither of these society subscriptions gives access to 1911 census data, which is accessed via <[www.1911census.co.uk](http://www.1911census.co.uk)>. Searches on this website are free, but transcripts and images are only available on a pay-per-view basis.

### **Berkshire Name Suite (BNS)**

This is the master index on the computers, comprising the following databases:

- **Berkshire censuses and indexes for 1851, 1861 and 1871** (both complete but mainly unchecked) and **1881**

- **Berkshire Marriage Index**

Over 95,000 entries from pre-1837 Berkshire parish registers. Note that the early entries only give dates and names of groom and bride. Later entries include parish if applicable, and whether married by licence.

- **Berkshire Burial Index (BBI)**

Over 679,000 entries to date. More than 80 per cent show all the data available. The rest show (as available) name, age, relationship, occupation and title plus a note indicating if there is further information such as date, place or cause of death in the original record. The eighth edition of the BBI on CD is now available from the bookshop.

- **Berkshire Strays Index**

20,500 Berkshire people recorded in events outside the county. No further census (1841 - 1901) or WWI details are

being added to this index.

- **Berkshire Miscellaneous Index**  
100,279 disparate records extracted and submitted by individuals.

#### Other electronic databases

- **LDS Vital Records Indexes** for the UK and some other parts of Europe
- **Census returns of 1861, 1871, 1891** for some counties including the London 1891 census
- **Census return for 1881 for all UK** including the Channel Isles and the Royal Navy
- **National Burial Index** second edition
- **Local trade directories** from 1830 onwards

#### Library

There are nearly 8,000 items in the library. About 20 per cent of these are Berkshire related; the rest comprise UK, Irish and international material. See <[www.berksfhs.org.uk/library/catalogue](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/library/catalogue)>.

Major items and series include:

- **International Genealogical Index** on fiche (1988) for Great Britain
- **1851 census return indexes** for most English and Welsh counties
- CDs of **Berkshire MIs, overseers' papers, militia lists, directories**
- **Local history and genealogy** books for other UK counties, Scotland, Ireland and some other countries
- **General reference** section of books on FH methodology, poor law, surnames, photographs, local history, education, poll books, military
- **National Index of Parish Registers**
- **Directories:** biographical, trade, professional, military, clerical and school
- Published **family histories/pedigrees** and a large number of donated hand-written documents
- **Berkshire Family Historian** from 1975 to the present day
- **Berkshire census returns** for 1851 to 1881 on film

#### • Exchange Magazine Archive

five- to seven-year files of other family history societies' journals.

Published Berkshire parish register transcripts are listed on the website. These are mainly for pre-1974 Berkshire and include north Berkshire (now Oxfordshire).

#### Research Centre tours

next: 19.30 Monday 10 May

Tours must be pre-booked, and are limited to 10 people. They last for about two hours, and allow a short time to browse in the library, to buy publications and to use the computers for family history research. They show what research and finding aids are available (which are not restricted to only those with Berkshire connections). Further details from Arthur Beech on 0118 978 4781 or <[researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk)>

#### Search options

- Do your own search at the Research Centre and make printouts.
- Visit a Berks FHS stand at a family history fair.
- Request a postal search.

#### Postal searches and charges

The cost for searching one surname in the whole **Berkshire Name Suite** is currently £5. For searching one surname in one database only (from those listed on page 34) the cost is £2. These fees include the search and a printout of up to 25 lines of results.

A search of **indexes to the 1851 census for other counties**, with print-out of results, may range from £3 to £10 according to media. Please check in the online library catalogue first to ensure that the county you want is stocked.

Please send your search request to the address on page 34 giving:

- your membership number
  - email/telephone details
  - a stamped, self-addressed envelope large enough for several A4 sheets (2 x IRCs if writing from overseas)
  - a bank draft or sterling cheque drawn on a London clearing bank
- and mark your envelope BNS or OCCI, depending upon the database you wish to search.

# Gleanings *from exchange magazines*

*Copies of these articles (paper or electronic) can be supplied on request. For paper send your request with a SAE (min 11 x 22 cm) and two loose stamps to Exchange Magazines, Berks FHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ. For electronic copies apply to <gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk>. Please supply both the issue date of the Historian and full details of the title and source of the Gleaning. Copyright law requires that photocopies of articles in journals may only be made for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research. Only one article from any one issue can be supplied. All digital copies must be printed off and deleted.*

## **200 years ago**

Extracts from the *Hereford Journal*, December quarter 1809, showing snippets of life and news the time

(17) *Herefordshire FHS* vol X/11 Oct 2009

## **Menin Gate: Northamptonshire inscriptions**

Article about the memorial in Belgium to British and Commonwealth soldiers who died during the First World War, along with a list of 325 names

(36) *Northamptonshire FHS* vol 32/2 Nov 2009

## **Barnburgh and Harlington**

How the 1851 census provides much information of great value to the family historian in creating a picture of these villages at the time

(50a) *Doncaster Ancestor* vol 19/3 Autumn 2009

## **Death and taxes**

A very under-used source of information

(27) *Lincolnshire FHS* vol 20/4 Nov 2009

## **The Old Bailey online**

Advice on how to search the site

(38) *Nottinghamshire FHS* vol 12/12 Oct 2009

## **South Walsham National School logbook**

1872 - 1922 extracts with some photos giving a fascinating insight into life at the time

(35) *Norfolk Ancestor* vol 6/3 Sept 2009

## **Yorkshire strumpets bound for Van Dieman's Land**

Analysis of 600 unfortunate women convicts transported on four ships 1828-53, with names of 24 Yorkshire lasses

(50) *Yorkshire Family Historian* vol 35/3 Sep 2009

## **Arnos Vale Cemetery**

The restoration work during 2009 with photos

(3) *Bristol & Avon FHS* no 137 Sep 2009

## **Family history websites**

Lists about 40 sites recommended by members, coverage including Ireland and Canada, some well known, others not

(23) *Lancashire* vol 31/4 Nov 2009

